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THE UNITED STATES NAVAL WAR COLLEGE



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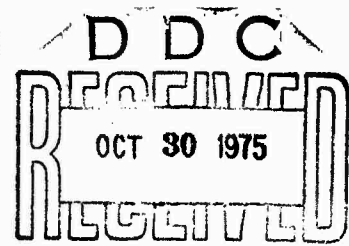
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13. ABSTRACT

Established in 1884, the Naval War College operated until 1917 when, upon the United States' entry into the World War, it was deactivated. This early operational period was characterized by a struggle to maintain existence and to develop a distinct institutional identity while contributing to the development of American naval professionalism. The College reopened in June, 1919, under the direction of Admiral William S. Sims, USN. He and his successors worked during the interwar period to develop a naval educational institution responsive to American naval needs arising from the experience of the First World War, developments in naval strategy and tactics as well as in science and technology, and worldwide political, economic and social forces. To fulfill an evolving College mission of "training for higher command," Sims devised an institutional structure that endured without major permanent change throughout the interwar years. During this period successive College administrators worked to assure that the College's role in naval preparedness would not be downgraded or minimized. This effort was complicated in the 1920s by arms limitation programs, public apathy and antipathy, and political and economic instability. In the 1930s administrative difficulties were further intensified by rising world-wide nationalism and militarism. By 1940 several aspects of the College program had stagnated. However, its graduates permeated the Navy command structure. Therefore, when the College's continued existence was threatened, a solution was devised--based primarily on a program of shorter, more specialized courses. This development forced cancellation of a Navy Department plan to deactivate the College again while providing a basis for wartime operations and postwar expansion.

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UNITED STATES NAVAL WAR COLLEGE, 1919-1941:
AN INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO NAVAL PREPAREDNESS

by

Gerald John Kennedy

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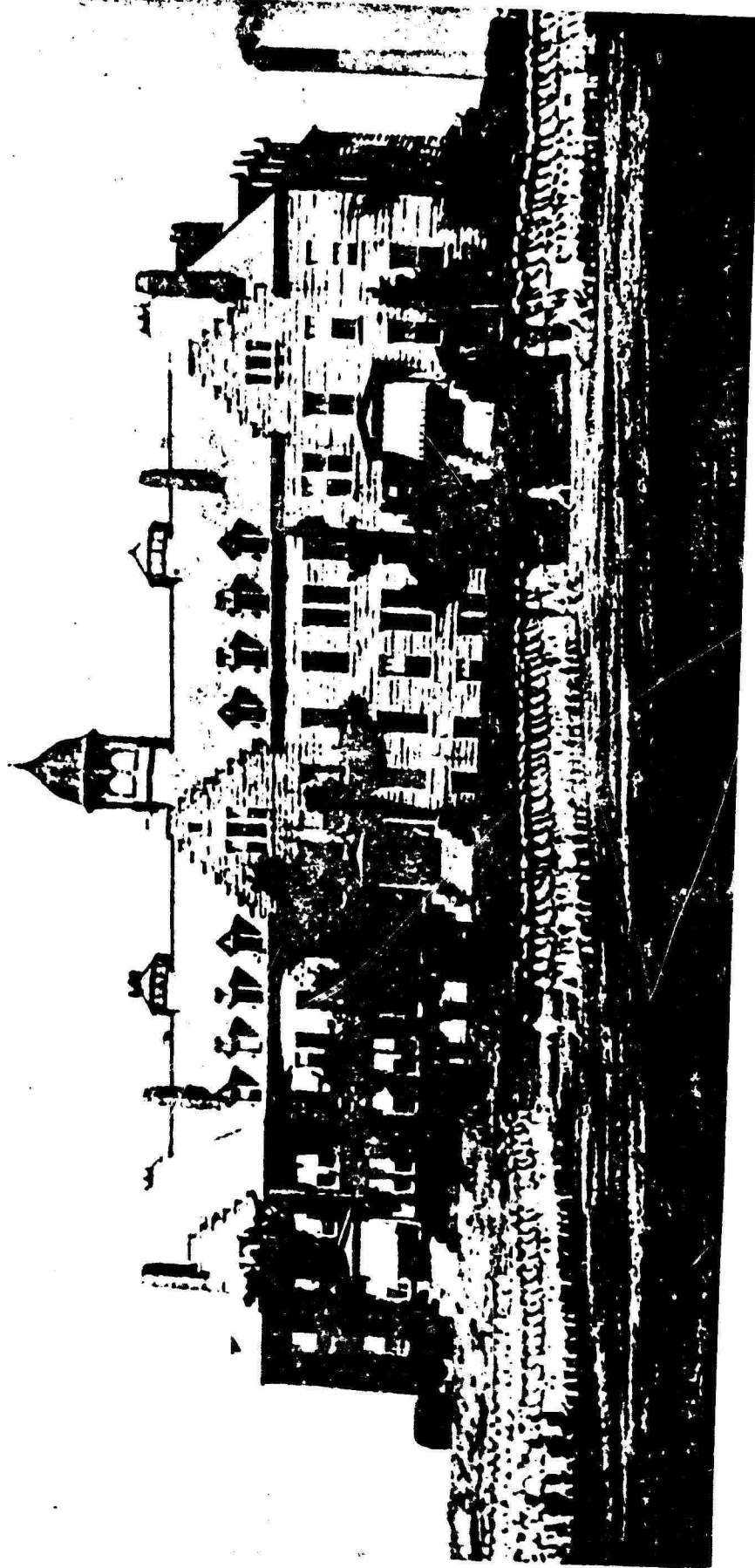
June, 1975

TO MY PARENTS

PATRICK JOSEPH KENNEDY

and

MARY FITZGERALD KENNEDY



A 1919 view of the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island
(A detachment of sailors from the Naval Training Station are drilling in the foreground)

PREFACE

Every profession is vitally concerned with the quality and quantity of education (both preparatory and sustaining) required of its members. In this regard, the naval profession does not differ from its sister professions. The effective use of available educational resources becomes a crucial issue in determining the extent to which the educational process (and product) is fulfilling the professional expectations held for it.

This study treats of one educational institution in the continuum of education and training in the United States Navy: the United States Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. Conceived as an institution to study naval warfare, the College has been an important--and oftentimes, controversial--element in the professional education of naval officers. In the pages that follow, institutional performance during the period 1919-1941 is presented and assessed. The challenges faced during these interwar years differed markedly from those encountered in an earlier period (1884-1917), in the Second World War, and in the post-war years.

A long and pleasant association with the United States Navy via three viewpoints (enlisted, commissioned officer, and civilian employee) as well as active participation in the educational process in equally diverse perspectives (student, teacher, and administrator) have naturally directed my interest and concern toward the education of American naval leaders. The Naval War College as the continuing apex of naval education was a logical sphere of interest. Only delineation of that interest remained.

The sense of satisfaction that accompanies achievement of the doctorate is enhanced, in considerable measure, by the recognition that while the honor is singular, the effort is truly collective. Therefore, an abiding warm reaction in any successful doctorate program is found not in the knowledge absorbed or in the insights spawned, but in the recognition that many kind and generous people eased the task.

Attainment of the doctoral goal is greatly facilitated by the professional direction and assistance of those who have achieved it. Therefore, I am deeply indebted to Dr. R. C. Loehr, Professor of History, University of Minnesota, for his unselfish assistance and genuine interest in this study. His enduring interest and competency in the role of the military and naval establishments in American society, past and

present, provided a most essential resource and reference frame.

Gratitude of the highest order is likewise extended to Dr. Stuart Schwartz, Associate Professor, Department of History, and Dr. Robert E. Kennedy, Jr., Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Minnesota, for their intellectual stimulation and personal involvement. Their efforts in allied areas of military education (particularly in Latin America) added much to my understanding of military sociology.

Indispensible help was provided by Anthony S. Nicolosi, Curator, Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. The general assistance of Mr. Nicolosi, manifest in his comprehensive knowledge of Naval War College history, records, and archives, constitutes a bulwark in this study. His professional counterpart in the Washington (D.C.) area, Dr. Gibson B. ("Sandy") Smith, Navy and Old Army Branch, National Archives, complemented the efforts of Mr. Nicolosi. Their mutual diligence unearthed much relevant Naval War College material concerning College, Department, office, bureau and fleet relationships.

I owe a special debt to Edwin A. Thompson, Director, Declassification Division, National Archives, and his assistant, William B. Fraley, for their professional interest, encouragement, and administrative assistance.

This study was assisted by a grant from the Department of Advanced Research, United States Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. To this program and its scholarly, personable director, Dr. James E. King, I am deeply grateful.

Finally, to Brother Martin L. Carrigan, S.J., Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois, who many years ago provided the initial opportunity to undertake a college education, who watched and encouraged my interest in the United States Navy, and who has remained a cherished friend through the years, goes an appreciation unmarked by adjectival modification.

ABSTRACT

UNITED STATES NAVAL WAR COLLEGE, 1919-1941:
AN INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO NAVAL PREPAREDNESS

by

Gerald John Kennedy

Established in 1884, the Naval War College operated until 1917 when, upon the United States' entry into the World War, it was deactivated. This early operational period was characterized by a struggle to maintain existence and to develop a distinct institutional identity while contributing to the development of American naval professionalism.

The College reopened in June, 1919, under the direction of Admiral William S. Sims, USN, the incumbent president in 1917. Admiral Sims and his successors worked during the interwar period to develop a naval educational institution responsive to American naval needs arising from the experience of the First World War, developments in naval strategy and tactics as well as in science and technology, and worldwide political, economic and social forces.

To fulfill an evolving College mission of "training for higher command," Sims devised an institutional structure that endured without major permanent change throughout the interwar years. During this period successive College administrations worked to assure that the College's role in naval preparedness would not be downgraded or minimized. This effort was complicated in the 1920s by arms limitation programs, public apathy and antipathy, and political and economic instability. In the 1930s administrative difficulties were further intensified by rising world-wide nationalism and militarism.

Within the College operation, persistent staffing problems became particularly acute after 1936. At this time an expanding American naval establishment also caused student officer enrollments to decrease significantly. By 1930 the College program of war gaming exercises, professional lectures, and student theses increasingly stressed naval strategy and tactics to the relative neglect of other professional areas (i.e., amphibious warfare, logistics, and Army-Navy joint operations). In part, this de-emphasis was frequently fostered by a lack of essential data. Officer graduates of the interwar period revealed an over-riding distrust of Japanese national policy which, they believed, required maintenance of a strong American navy.

The College's physical facilities throughout the 1919-1941 period were generally adequate. The overcrowding of the late 1920s was followed by excess capacity after the mid-1930s. An extension to the College building in 1934 and an expansion of library facilities in 1938 provided valuable support to the College program.

By 1940 several aspects of the College program had stagnated. However, its graduates permeated the Navy command structure. Therefore, when the College's continued existence was threatened, a solution was devised--based primarily on a program of shorter, more specialized

courses. This development forced cancellation of a Navy Department plan to deactivate the College again while providing a basis for wartime operations and postwar expansion.

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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE PRESIDENTS: 1920-1930

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Rear Admiral C. S. Williams	1922-1925
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(Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College)

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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE PRESIDENT: 1930-1941

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Rear Admiral C. P. Snyder	1937-1939
Rear Admiral E. C. Kalbfus	1934-1936; 1939-1942

(Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College)

Plate between Pages 301 and 302

A war gaming exercise (ca 1940) at the Naval War
College, Newport, Rhode Island.
(Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, 6 October 1884, marked a major thrust in the naval renaissance then getting underway in the United States.¹ In the demobilization following the Civil War, the Navy had been reduced to a skeleton force of approximately fifty ships. In the immediate postwar years efforts to obtain authorization for new ship construction were largely unsuccessful. After all, warships seemed to be expensive ornaments to penurious congressmen not yet susceptible to the imperialist virus. As a result, from 1865 to the opening years of the 1880 decade, reconstruction, economic development, and social problems dominated American thought and action.

¹Walter R. Herrick, Jr., The American Naval Revolution (Baton Rouge, 1966), (hereafter cited as Naval Revolution). Herrick's volume represents the major publication specifically treating the "revolution" as an entity. Other references which consider aspects of the "revolution" include George T. Davis, A Navy Second to None: The Development of Modern American Naval Policy (New York, 1940), (hereafter cited as A Navy Second to None), and Harold and Margaret Sprout, The Rise of American Naval Power, 1776-1918 (Princeton, N.J., 1946), (hereafter cited as American Naval Power).

Antiquated technology and lack of equipment, plus an ossified officer corps more interested in social status than in politics and professionalism, were perhaps more to blame than political opposition and public apathy. However, in the 1880's improvements in naval architecture, armament, armor, and power plant, together with enlightened personnel training, would combine to make a modern fleet possible. At this time, also, an increasing number of politicians and naval theorists began to view navies as essential elements in the diplomatic and commercial intercourse necessary to developing and maintaining spheres of influences. These spokesmen were not necessarily jingoes or imperialists, but men who believed that no nation would respect American interests under mere moral pressure.

Despite exasperation and delay the American navy improved slowly. Through the efforts of Secretary of Navy William E. Chandler administrative reform and professional development began to merge. His successor in the secretaryship, Benjamin F. Tracy, combatted both spoilsmen and inertia to secure more ships, improved training, and better treatment of officers and enlisted personnel.

In furtherance of the naval renaissance--and in opposition to many senior naval officers who saw no need for classroom training beyond the Naval Academy--

Secretary Chandler in 1883 appointed a board consisting of Commodore Stephen B. Luce, USN, Captain William T. Sampson, USN, and Captain Casper Goodrich, USN,² to undertake a feasibility study on the proposed "advance course of study" for naval officers.

Acting on the favorable recommendations of this board, Secretary Chandler approved the establishment of "a college for an advanced course of professional study by naval officers" at Newport, Rhode Island.³ With Commodore Luce as the first president and a faculty of eight officers, the College began operations in a vacated poorhouse on Coasters Harbor Island at Newport. The first session, limited to approximately three weeks, consisted of staff lectures and volunteer presentations by the student officers.

The establishment of an institution for the study of naval warfare (i.e., strategy and tactics), international law, naval history and policy, and the best

²Naval rank cited throughout this study refers to the naval rank held at that time. No effort has been made to trace subsequent promotions. Also, since virtually all naval officers cited in this study were members of the Regular Navy (USN), this identification will be omitted in future except where variations exist, i.e., USMC (United States Marine Corps); USNR (United States Naval Reserve); USCG (United States Coast Guard), and RN (Royal Navy) and its sister services (RAF, Royal Air Force; RA, Royal Army).

³Navy Department, General Order No. 325, 6 October 1884.

foreign professional military and naval thought was a landmark in the professional growth of the United States Navy. The College was also the first of its kind in the world. Although its establishment reflects favorably on the founders, the reception it received from many naval officers was less than enthusiastic. In collaboration with political associates, they worked to undo the aspirations of Commodore Luce and his supporters. Their opposition almost succeeded.⁴

⁴The College's early struggle for survival is treated in many books and articles, but most vividly in the biographies of Admirals Stephen B. Luce and Alfred Thayer Mahan. On Luce and the early years of the College see Albert Gleaves, The Life and Letters of Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce (New York, 1925), pp. 168-196.

For Mahan, see W. D. Puleston, Mahan: The Life and Work of Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan (New Haven, 1939) and C. C. Taylor, Alfred Thayer Mahan: 1840-1914 (New York, 1920). An examination of Mahan's career as well as his role as spokesman for American imperialistic doctrine is treated in Richard S. West, Admirals of American Empire (Indianapolis, 1948), pp. 18-22, 39-45, 81-97, 146-161, 211-221, and 303-321.

Throughout his professional career, Admiral Luce spoke and wrote regularly on the Naval War College. Two articles dealing with his attempts to clarify the College's objectives and functions and to reduce intra-service opposition are contained in United States Naval Institute Proceedings (hereafter cited as USNIP), Vol. 37, March and September, 1911, respectively: "On the True Relations between the Department of the Navy and the Naval War College," pp. 83-86; and "On the Relations between the U.S. Naval War College and the Line Officer of the U.S. Navy," pp. 785-800. In the former article, Luce emphasizes that "the true function of the Naval War College is educational, not executive" (*italics Luce*). In the latter article, he decries "the lack of perception" on the part of many officers concerning the College's increasing contribution to American naval

During 1887 the College operated without financial support since Congress had failed to appropriate funds for its operations; in 1890 and again in 1893, no classes were convened. During this time the College was shifted to other locations within the Newport naval complex. The end appeared very near in 1894 when some of the bureau chiefs almost succeeded in convincing Secretary of Navy Hilary Herbert that the College should be discontinued. Wishing to form his own opinion,

professionalism. Hopefully, he concludes, "a brighter day has already dawned for the College."

Equally informative, though abbreviated treatments of this early struggle for survival appear in Ronald H. Spector, Professors of War: The Naval War College and the Modern American Navy (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1967), (hereafter cited as Professors of War); Rear Admiral William V. Pratt, "The Naval War College," USNIP, 53 (September, 1927), pp. 38-39; John D. Hayes, "Stephen B. Luce and the Beginnings of the U.S. Naval War College," Naval War College Review, XXIII (January, 1971), pp. 51-59, (hereafter cited as NWC Review), and Charles Oscar Paullin, Paullin's History of Naval Administration, 1775-1911 (Annapolis, 1968), pp. 414-416, (hereafter cited as History). Interestingly, Paullin states that many naval officers of this early period decried classroom instruction, believing that the only necessary postgraduate Navy school was "the quarterdeck of the ship."

The early institutional experiences of the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, founded in 1909, closely parallel those of the Naval War College. Problems of financial support, physical facilities, staff, curriculum, professional opposition, and even relocation, faced directors of the school. Alexander W. Rilling, "The First Fifty Years of Graduate Education in the United States Navy" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1972), pp. 87-118, 141-150, (hereafter cited as First Fifty Years).

Herbert personally visited the College, became impressed with its work and the writings of Mahan, and resolved to continue its operation.

Failing to close the institution, its opponents attempted at various times during the next few decades to remove it to Washington where it could be controlled directly. This campaign also failed due in large measure to the dynamic and dedicated men who occupied the presidency at the time. Gradually, and in spite of the harassing tactics of its detractors in and out of the service, the reputation of the College grew. Active opposition, however, never totally ended in the years before the First World War.

During this early uncertain period, Luce and his successors were faced with the problems of defining the College's mission; of obtaining adequate financial support, physical facilities and staff personnel; of securing a representative student body, and developing a program of study. At the same time they had to defend the College for many members of the Navy hierarchy viewed Naval War College graduates as constituting an increasingly influential clique that might one day threaten the existing power structure.⁵ These factors

⁵Sims to Rear Admiral Raymond Rodgers, 21 June 1919, The Papers of Rear Admiral Williams S. Sims, USN,

also contributed to the College's early insecure existence.

Naval War College studies in the period before the First World War were highly flexible, attuned to changing political and military conditions. In actual practice, delineation of the College's early coursework or summer "conferences" was determined largely by United States foreign policy objectives which served as the bases for naval policy. While the former were promulgated infrequently and not always stated explicitly, a few traditional declarations (Washington's Farewell Address, Monroe Doctrine, and "Open Door") constituted the bases of American diplomatic thought and action. Implementation of these policies had frequently involved naval commanders abroad.⁶ Therefore, the determination

Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, (Washington, D.C.), Container 25, (hereafter cited as Sims Papers). Sims recognized that much work remained in this regard: "I have always felt that one of the great drawbacks to the success of the College was the feeling of animosity in the Fleet. I am going to make an effort to correct this if possible . . . "

⁶Many publications dealing with United States diplomatic history cite the role of naval officers in early American diplomacy. In particular, the names of John Paul Jones, Preble, Decatur, Porter, Rodgers, Biddle, Stockton, Kearny, Perry, and Shufeldt appear in significant roles. In a volume pertinent to the development of American diplomatic practice, Charles Oscar Paullin depicts the early naval officer-diplomat as pre-eminently a "shirt-sleeve" diplomatist who was "a stranger to the devious and tortuous methods of procedure which so long disfigured international statecraft." Charles Oscar Paullin, Diplomatic Negotiations of American Naval Officers, 1778-1883 (Baltimore, 1912), pp. 7-9.

to study the theory and practice of naval warfare and to prepare naval commanders to handle delicate diplomatic situations in peacetime would constitute major challenges to effective reactivation of the College.

In its formative years, the College gradually overcame problems associated with student officer enrollments of varying size and course offerings of fluctuating lengths.⁷ Some degree of program stability had

In addition to repeating the professional and personal characteristics and experiences that the naval officer-diplomat possessed, Professor James Dealey--a Naval War College academic staff member in the interwar period--believes that the president of the United States (as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces)--found it easier to appoint a naval officer to many diplomatic missions. James Quayle Dealey, Foreign Policies of the United States (Boston, 1926), pp. 101-117.

A distillation of views on the desirability of the study of American foreign policy by naval officers is contained in Leland P. Lovette, "Why Should the Naval Officer Study American Foreign Policy?" USNIP, 56 (May, 1930), pp. 426-434.

The role of the military man in diplomacy is thoroughly considered in Alfred Vagts, Defense and Diplomacy: The Soldier and the Conduct of Foreign Relations (New York, 1956).

⁷ Naval War College, Outline History of the United States Naval War College, 1884 to date (Newport, 1937), (hereafter cited as Outline History). This informal compendium contains sketchy and incomplete reference to administrative activities during the 1884-1937 period. However, in some instances it contains the only extant documentation of institutional matters.

From 1885 to 1910, the student officers who completed the course work were not considered "graduates" because they attended only during the summer months, June through September. In 1904, the term "conference" was substituted for "class" only to have the terminology reversed in 1914. Beginning in 1911, student

been reached, however, when the United States entered the First World War.⁸

During the first decade of the twentieth century the deteriorating international situation received major consideration in the strategic problems studied at Newport. These studies included the possibility of war with each major power, the identity of the potential adversaries being rotated regularly.⁹ Although war with

officers completing "the long course" (twelve months) received diplomas, thereby qualifying for "graduate" status.

Navy Department, Annual Reports of the Navy Department, 1914 (Washington, 1915), pp. 34-36, (hereafter cited as Annual Reports--(year)). As recently as 1913, the College offered a two-week elementary course (presented during the summer months and concentrating on tactical problems); a four-month preparatory course (also offered during the summer months and emphasizing strategic and tactical problems, maneuvering board exercises, international law studies, and other subjects of professional interest; and a twelve-month "War College Course" (centered on command and leadership functions).

⁸Navy Department, Annual Reports--1916, p. 50. Within three years, the elementary and preparatory courses cited above had been discontinued and the "War College Course" had been divided into two sessions to begin in January and July and to contain not less than fifteen qualified student officers in each session.

⁹In war games played at the College and in war plans prepared at this time for the Navy Department, each major power was identified by "color" rather than name. Hopefully, this "security" technique minimized the implication that a nation's conduct was considered sufficiently hostile to involve possible war with the United States. Some of the principal colors and their relationship included: ORANGE (Japan), RED (Great Britain), BLACK (Germany), and GREEN (Mexico). The United States was assigned BLUE.

Japan had been considered increasingly possible after the Russo-Japanese conflict, Germany gradually emerged as the prime threat to United States national security. Therefore, College studies more and more involved confrontation of German and American fleets, in total or in specific units, usually in the Atlantic Ocean area.

As a result of these studies, as well as other tasks completed at the direction of the Chief of Naval Operations,¹⁰ graduates of the College were in the vanguard of national leaders advocating increased American military preparedness. When hostilities began in Europe

Only ORANGE-BLUE and ORANGE/RED-BLUE wars were then considered wars of "maximum effort" (total mobilization) requiring preparation of "readiness" war plans. The latter served as the bases for "operations war plans." Commander W. Glassford, "The Naval Communications Service in a Future War," 25 June 1926, NWCA, Record Group 13: Staff Lectures, (hereafter cited as NWCA RG-13).

¹⁰Henry P. Beers, "The Development of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations," Military Affairs; Parts I-II, Spring and Fall, 1946; pp. 40-68, 10-38; Parts III-IV, Summer and Winter, 1947; pp. 88-99, 229-239.

Paullin, History, pp. 376-381. This office had been established in 1915 as a solution to an extant unwieldy Department organizational structure. Prior to this time, the Secretary of Navy had received his professional counsel from his Aides, who, in 1915, consisted of eight senior ranking officers directing the bureaus of the Department. In reality, these officers functioned as virtually autonomous units, thereby impeding functional coordination.

Navy Department, Navy Regulations, 1917, Chapter 2 (The Navy Department), Section 3, paragraph 126 (2). Upon establishment, the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations assumed "direction" of the Naval War College.

in August, 1914, these officers, cognizant of American military deficiencies in manpower and material requirements for modern warfare, sought to convince the government and general public that preparedness strengthened national security. Many private organizations and civic leaders, pointing to ravished Belgium as illustrative of the fate awaiting an unprepared nation, undertook a campaign to strengthen the nation's military posture.¹¹

While the main thrust of the preparedness campaign involved the nation's military arm, the Navy benefited markedly through passage of the Naval Act of 1916.¹² This legislation authorized construction of a variety of ship types with destroyers and coastal submarines constituting over two-thirds of the number approved. The appropriation exceeded \$300,000,000,

¹¹Chief among these organization were the National Security League, the American Defense Society, the League to Enforce Peace, and the American Rights Committee. Public figures prominent in the preparedness movement included former President Theodore Roosevelt, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, and Henry L. Stimson. President Woodrow Wilson would be a tardy, albeit enthusiastic, convert to the preparedness campaign.

¹²United States Senate, Navy Yearbook, 1917 and 1918, 65th Congress, 3rd Session, Document No. 418, (Washington, 1919), pp. 400-467, 673. This volume consists of "all acts authorizing the construction of the 'new Navy' and a Resume of annual naval appropriation laws from 1883 to 1919." Included in the volume are tables showing existing naval strength, in ships and personnel; costs of maintaining the American navy, and statistics of foreign navies.

more than double the 1915 naval appropriation, and a six-fold increase over Navy expenditures during the war with Spain. Additional provisions of the program included enlarging the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and elevation of the Chief of Naval Operations to the rank of admiral; establishment of a naval flying corps; and substantial increases in personnel strength, both commissioned and enlisted, as well as the naval reserve force.

Included in the Navy's preparedness effort at this time were a number of studies undertaken at the request of the General Board¹³ and the Chief of Naval

¹³The General Board was established in 1900 as a result of experience with a Naval War Board formed during the Spanish-American war. Navy Department, General Order No. 544, 13 March 1900.

Upon cessation of hostilities in 1898, the Navy considered its experience with the Naval War Board to have been sufficiently satisfactory to begin agitation for a permanent war board to provide ongoing assistance to the Secretary of the Navy. Establishment of the General Board followed, its original nine members to include the president of the Naval War College. As the Board evolved, its duties included devising "measures and plans for the effective preparation and maintenance of the fleet for war . . . prepare and submit to the Secretary of Navy plans of campaign, including cooperation with the Army and employment of all elements of naval defense . . . constantly revise these plans in accordance with the latest information received." Navy Department, Navy Regulations, 1917, Chapter 2, Section 13, paragraphs 166 (1) and 167 (1 and 2).

A thorough discussion of the early organization and operation of the General Board appears in Daniel J. Costello, "Planning for War: A History of the General Board of the Navy, 1900-1914" (unpublished Ph.D.

Operations. These investigations, covering a wide spectrum of administrative and operational issues, intensified the Navy's awareness of political and military developments throughout the world. College staff and student officers were engaged in these diverse assignments that involved the collection and processing of military information, the preparation of war plans, the ship construction programs, and other relevant professional matters.

When the United States entered the world war in April, 1917, the Navy had begun action on the expansion program authorized the previous year. Although actual naval construction had scarcely commenced, the Department had moved forward in personnel and materiel matters. Contracts for the expanded Navy had been executed and recruitment of personnel had been intensified.

dissertation, Tufts University, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 1968), (hereafter cited as General Board).

A condensed account of General Board activities appears in Jarvis Butler, "The General Board of the Navy," USNIP, 56 (August, 1930), pp. 700-705.

At this time an improvement in Army-Navy cooperation was also sought through the establishment of the Joint Board. This board, sometimes known as the Joint Army and Navy Board, was organized in 1903 to make recommendations to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy on matters involving mutual cooperation. In 1939 the board was placed under the direction of the President. It was active until early 1943 when most of its functions were taken over by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Board was formally dissolved on 1 September 1947.

In 1974, the Naval War College celebrated its ninetieth birthday. Despite a long and useful existence the College has received only superficial recognition from naval historians. Prior to 1946, this benign neglect stemmed, in no small measure, from the security sensitivity which precluded public discussion of its work as well as from a non-existent public relations program. As a result, its performance was best known to its former staff and student officers and to senior officers whose command responsibilities required utilization of the College's support capability. Throughout its long history the College has been a vital factor in the Navy's expanding education and training effort. Its reputation has been secured through its pioneering efforts in war planning, war gaming, and the intensive study of naval strategy and tactics. In recent years a vastly expanded and diversified course of study has included the admission of naval officers from friendly nations. Recognition has also stemmed from the thoroughness with which it prepared its students for the conflict in the Pacific in the Second World War. An energized public relations program has brought the College a measure of recognition unattained in the period 1884-1941.

The College life span divides naturally into four periods of varying lengths: (1) an early period extending from 1884 to 1917 when the College was deactivated because of the First World War; (2) an interwar period from 1919 to 1941 at which time the Second World War and an intensely increased rearmament program required a drastically restructured program to prevent a second deactivation; (3) the period of American participation in the Second World War, 1941-1945, and (4), the post-war period, 1945 to date.

Only one of these periods has received detailed historical study: 1884-1914.¹⁴ Spector's treatment of this period centers on the naval and political problems of establishing the College, the role and impact of Luce and Mahan on the College development, and the pioneering work in war planning and war gaming. Existing security considerations directed his attention away from the institutional operations per se.

My study continues the historical consideration of the College's development in the second distinct phase of its existence: the interwar years, 1919 to 1941. Through a descriptive, comparative methodology, based primarily on existing archives and records rather than on personalities, the study will examine the College's contribution to Navy preparedness for the Second World

¹⁴Spector, Professors of War.

War. In this regard, assessment of the College operations will include its response to the naval experience of the First World War, its projection of future naval strategy and tactics, plus its recognition of the impact of worldwide political, economic and social forces as they related to the naval establishment in general and the Naval War College in particular.

The information contained in this study has been obtained essentially through personal examination of the Naval War College Archives in the Naval Historical Collection, Newport, Rhode Island; of the General Board, Chief of Naval Operations, Bureau of Navigation, Secretary of Navy, and Assistant Secretary of Navy holdings in the National Archives, Washington, D.C., and in the Navy Department, Naval Historical Center, Operational Archives Division, Washington, D.C.; and of relevant personal papers retained at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The holdings in the Mahan Library at the Naval War College, Newport, and the Nimitz Library at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, provided valuable support in the areas of military education, seapower, naval strategy, tactics, and logistics.

The federal government's current declassification program has brought much material, heretofore unavailable, into the public record. Data pertaining to the

war games played at the Naval War College during the 1919-1941 period presently remain classified. Personnel shortages prevent the necessary review and declassification of this material.

Only in recent years has the Naval War College established a professional archival program. Previously, space shortages and infrequent reference use resulted in the destruction of much material pertinent to this study.¹⁵ These factors complicated reconstruction of the Naval War College's historical record between the years 1919 and 1941.

¹⁵In the mid-1960's when Spector wrote on the College's early history, he characterized the archives thusly: "The whole is in a rather disorganized condition with many items missing or out of place . . . many War College records appear to have been lost or discarded." Spector, Professors of War, pp. 308-310.

The present College archival program represents a professional effort to improve this condition.

PRESIDENTS OF THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE:
1919-1930



Rear Admiral W. S. Sims, USN
1919-1922



Rear Admiral C. S. Williams, USN
1922-1925



Rear Admiral W. V. Pratt, USN
1925-1927



Rear Admiral J. R. P. Pringle, USN
1927-1930

CHAPTER II

SIMS CHARTS THE COURSE: 1919

On April 12, 1919, a large, enthusiastic crowd gathered at Government Landing in Newport, Rhode Island, on a sunny--but chilly--spring afternoon to welcome Rear Admiral William S. Sims upon his return from war-time service.¹ The mayor of Newport had proclaimed a half-holiday and the downtown area was decorated festively for the occasion. Along the line of parade, Sims and the many participating units (which included over 3,000 naval personnel) were received warmly. The townspeople had opened their hearts to receive a national hero who had decided to spend the balance of his career in their midst.

Admiral Sims had returned to Newport to resume his presidency of the Naval War College which had been

¹Sims' reception was considered the largest civic demonstration held in Newport to that time. Editorially, Sims' return was considered an honor for Newport as well as a virtual guarantee that "the welfare of the War College and the interests of Newport as a naval base" would always be uppermost in Sims' activities. Newport Daily News, April 12, 1919.

interrupted when the United States entered the war.² Throughout "the war to end wars" Sims had served with distinction as Commander-in-Chief of the United States Naval Forces Operating in European Waters with headquarters in London, England.³ In this assignment he had added more lustre to a naval career that had begun thirty-nine years earlier and that had placed him high in the ranks of American naval officers.

In the spring of 1919 Sims still had three years to serve before reaching the mandatory retirement age. As he settled into the direction of the "apex"⁴ of naval professional education, Sims prepared to lead the College

²The College operation had been deactivated in May, 1917. However, the facilities were utilized intensely throughout the war because of space demands of the Commandant, Second Naval District. A few caretaker personnel continued to handle minor on-going operations. Eaton (President, (Acting)) to Secretary of Navy, 5 July 1917, National Archives, Record Group 80: General Records of the Navy, General Correspondence, 1916-1926, (hereafter cited as NA-RG 80), Box 501.

³While there was general agreement within Navy officialdom on Sims' title, Congressional hearings during 1920 on the efficiency of the Navy's preparedness and wartime operations revealed considerable misconception within the Department as to Sims' precise duties and responsibilities. Tracy Barrett Kittredge, Naval Lessons of the Great War (Garden City, 1921), pp. 340-342; 399-400; (hereafter cited as Naval Lessons).

⁴Navy Department, Annual Reports--1919, p. 89. These accounts of stewardship, voluminous at this time, decrease in coverage by eighty per cent during the interwar period.

through an unsettled social environment then reacting to the recent world war. The military and naval establishments would feel the impact of the unrest, suspicion, and apathy permeating the postwar world. These conditions would challenge not only American political and economic leadership, but also the Navy that Sims loved and served so well.

When Sims returned to Newport, the justification for the College's existence had been largely accepted within the naval service. Earlier active opposition to the College's existence had been reduced to reluctant toleration. The major problem immediately facing Sims was development of an acceptable program which would thwart any renewed hostility. The task was complicated by the Navy Department's need to restructure the organization to meet postwar requirements.

The usual assessment of wartime military operations began shortly after the Armistice. Rapid expansion of American military and naval might in 1917-1918 encouraged waste in excess of previous national experience. The power and influence which the military establishment had wielded during the war years would be examined carefully and thoroughly. As a result, when the war ended, the nature and role of the postwar military and naval establishments became a major political issue.

In 1919 the Navy faced the task of bringing home approximately two million American military personnel from worldwide locations.⁵ The Royal Navy had moved over fifty per cent of this number to the various war zones. However, with the Armistice, other duties prevented its participation in the return movement which fell entirely on a rapidly diminishing American navy. In addition to this operational problem the Navy faced growing public apathy toward the military establishment and increasing public indignation arising from realization of the war's real costs (in bodies and heartaches as well as in dollars). The technological revolution in military hardware, sparked by wartime developments, further complicated the efforts of the military and naval leaders to achieve an appropriate postwar organizational balance.⁶

Since personnel education and training are continuous organizational requirements, the problems confronting the Navy in these areas in 1919 differed little from those confronting business and industry also undergoing postwar reconversion. The postwar Navy, too, had to evaluate current education and training

⁵Navy Department, ibid., p. 19.

⁶Ibid., p. 4. Secretary Daniels identified this task as maintenance of "symmetry or wholeness in the naval organization."

efforts as well as to anticipate future personnel development programs.⁷ Although the urgency factor was downgraded in peacetime naval education and training, the need for responsive programs continued. Many wartime programs ceased with the war's end but reactivation of the Naval War College was never questioned. In the immediate postwar period, Secretary of Navy Josephus F. Daniels moved to increase the Department's responsiveness while Rear Admiral William S. Sims assumed direction of the Naval War College.

As the Department and the College sought to adjust to postwar naval needs, a mutual disdain between Daniels and Sims surfaced. At the beginning of the period, the spirited antagonists were superficially amicable. In the months ahead the publisher-politician and the military professional were often at odds as to the best course of action within their respective jurisdictions.

⁷The nomenclature of the period did not delineate clearly between "education" and "training." Today, the former "implies instruction or individual study for the purpose of intellectual development and the cultivation of wisdom and judgment" whereas the latter "identifies instruction that is oriented to a particular military specialty and that is designed to develop a technical kill." John W. Masland and Laurence I. Radway, Soldiers and Scholars: Military Education and National Policy (Princeton, 1957), 50, (hereafter cited as Soldiers and Scholars).

Secretary Daniels' early career had been in journalism, most prominently as owner, publisher, and editor of the Raleigh (North Carolina) News and Observer.⁸ From 1896 to 1901 his association with political affairs consisted primarily of membership on the Democratic National Committee. His involvement in political campaigns and his subsequent endorsement of Woodrow Wilson's presidential candidacy led to his appointment as Secretary of the Navy. To this juncture Daniels' career had involved a minimal knowledge of, or experience with, things naval. His appointment was viewed by some observers to resemble "the look of a noble reward for services rendered."⁹ In his eight-year secretaryship, Daniels' loyalty to President Wilson never faltered. Yet his administration of the Navy Department was frequently divisive.¹⁰

⁸E. David Cronon, The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus F. Daniels (Lincoln, 1963), (hereafter cited as Cabinet Diaries). This volume contains valuable insight into Daniels' thinking on events and personalities during the period 1913-1921.

Other volumes dealing with Daniels' public career include Joseph L. Morrison, Josephus Daniels Says . . . (Chapel Hill, 1962), Joseph L. Morrison, Josephus Daniels: The Small-d Democrat (Chapel Hill, 1966), (hereafter cited as The Small-d Democrat), and Joseph L. Morrison, Josephus Daniels: Tar Heel Editor (Chapel Hill, 1939).

⁹Cronon, Cabinet Diaries, v.

¹⁰Ibid., vi-vii. Cronon contends that "probably no Secretary of Navy was the subject of more controversy or received more personal abuse than Daniels during his

When Daniels assumed direction of the Navy Department in 1913, Admiral Sims was concluding a staff assignment at the Naval War College. A year earlier he had completed "the long course." Since graduation from the Naval Academy in 1880, Sims had served in a variety of assignments, ranging from naval attache through Inspector of Target Practice to naval aide to President Theodore Roosevelt.¹¹ His role in the improvement of naval gunnery constituted a major contribution to the Navy's growing professionalism.¹² Wherever Sims served--

term of service. Critics charged that he lacked an elementary comprehension of the role and requirements of a modern navy, that he played favorites in his appointments, that he had no respect for naval custom or discipline. Even the manifest success of the Navy did not still the criticism."

Morrison, The Small-d Democrat, pp. 50-51, 140. More favorably, Morrison believes that "Daniels left a record as a strong executive . . . any fair reading of the record must result in the verdict that he was one of the great Secretaries of the Navy."

¹¹Naval War College, Naval War College Archives, Record Group 22, Presidents, (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG-22.)

¹²Elting E. Morison, Admiral Sims and the Modern American Navy, Revised Edition (New York, 1968), pp. 81-85, (hereafter cited as Admiral Sims). While on the China Station in 1900-1901, Sims consulted with Captain Percy Scott, RN, concerning the British efforts to improve gunfire accuracy. Percy, an astute student of weaponry and gunfire, had devised a system which "permitted the pointer to keep his line of sight constantly on the target throughout the roll." Sims modified Scott's methods and then installed them in American gunfire practice. Some observers minimized the improvement that followed Sims' efforts, stating that since both American and British naval batteries used telescopic lens, the real difference existed in the way the lens were mounted on the gun.

afloat or ashore--he was persistently in the public limelight. A dedicated reformer, tireless in his search for professional excellence, Sims' methods and mannerisms frequently annoyed many senior officer associates, though junior officers supported him virtually unswervingly.

The personal and professional differences between Daniels and Sims divided Navy leadership at a time when a unity of effort was essential to postwar adjustments. While mobilization had required prompt action to meet wartime obligations, demobilization required quantitative and qualitative measures with which the Navy had had little previous experience. In fulfilling its role in naval planning and education for higher command, the Naval War College required continuous, unfaltering support. Disrespect, contempt, and rancor among Department officials, senior officers, and civilian leaders would only impede essential coordination.

With the end of the war, Sims next moved to what represented his final command. There were few senior commands in the Navy that interested him. After the heady experience in London any subsequent command would lack the power and prestige to which he had become accustomed. In deciding upon his next assignment Sims thoroughly assessed his possible contributions to the postwar Navy. He knew well that other senior officers

resented his prominence; that--for him--the Office of Chief of Naval Operations lacked an effective voice in naval affairs, and that disharmonious relations with Secretary Daniels boded ill for Department accord. He concluded that a resumption of his Naval War College presidency would provide the independence he deemed essential for his professional effectiveness.¹³

2

In advance of his departure from London, Sims wrote to Secretary Daniels, presenting the essential elements of his plan for reactivation of the Naval War College. Since Sims considered the College as "second only to the Naval Academy" in its mission to provide "higher training in the art of Command and coordinated effort," he believed the re-opening of the College

¹³Sims to Captain W. V. Pratt, 7 February 1919, The Papers of Rear Admiral William Veazie Pratt, Naval Historical Collection, Naval War College, Newport, R.I. Sims could see no other possible command for himself "under present conditions." He believed that were he to return to the fleet or to Washington he "would only kick up a row."

Pratt to Sims, 10 March 1919, ibid. Although Pratt later disagreed with Sims on the issue of naval wartime preparedness, at this time he regretted Sims' decision to return to Newport, believing there was a greater need for him with the fleet or eventually as Chief of Naval Operations.

For additional insights on Sims' deliberations regarding his postwar career possibilities, see Morison, Admiral Sims, pp. 465-468.

required serious thought and concentrated effort based upon "the intelligent use and direction of the Naval Establishment."¹⁴

Sims addressed himself specifically to the problems of organization, including staffing; physical facilities, and curriculum. Upon its reactivation, the College continued under the dual control of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Bureau of Navigation. While Navy Regulations authorized the Chief of Naval Operations to "direct" the Naval War College, the Bureau of Navigation would administer "the training and education of line officers and enlisted men."¹⁵ In the performance of these duties, Bureau of Navigation staff personnel were involved intimately in the administrative and operational details of the College. In addition, the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, as a member of the General Board, was "custodian of the plans of campaign and war preparations." As such, he was authorized to "indicate to the War College and Intelligence Officer the information required of them by the General Board . . . "¹⁶

The Chief of Naval Operations, "charged with the

¹⁴Sims to Secretary of the Navy, 15 January 1919, National Archives, Record Group 24: Bureau of Navigation, General Correspondence, 1925-1940; Box 76, (hereafter cited as NA-RG 24).

¹⁵Navy Department, Navy Regulations, 1917, Chapter 2, Section 4, Paragraph 131 (1).

¹⁶Navy Department, General Order 544, ibid.

operations of the Fleet and with the preparation and readiness of plans for its use in war,"¹⁷ would frequently use the resources of the College in the discharge of his planning responsibilities. In actual practice, the College president operated independently. The Chief of Naval Operations and the Bureau of Navigation, within the constraints of programmatic diversity and budgetary limitations, supported the College administrative efforts to achieve the institutional objectives.

3

Organizationally, Sims proposed five major departments: Command, Strategy (to include International Law), Tactics, Correspondence,¹⁸ and Executive-Administrative. This alignment represented an administrative innovation. In the immediate pre-war operation, the small number of staff and student officers (rarely exceeding twenty-five) discouraged a formal organizational structure. With an expanded enrollment and distinct specialties arising from the wartime experience, Sims believed the time opportune to formalize the College organization.

¹⁷Navy Department, Navy Regulations, 1917, Chapter 2, Section 3, Paragraph 126 (1).

¹⁸Navy Department, General Order No. 89, 1 April 1914. The correspondence course program sought to bring selected portions of the Naval War College classroom experience to naval officers unable to attend personally for the full year.

The proposed College staff consisted of military professionals and civilian assistants, academic and administrative. To commence operations, Sims envisioned a total staff of fifty members. Of this number he identified the thirteen billets authorized by the Department for naval officers;¹⁹ four civilian assistants; twenty clerical personnel, and twelve civil service personnel.

In outlining his plans for academic staff, Sims maintained that flag officers²⁰ should direct the Strategy and Tactics courses. These officers, as teachers and professional experts, would provide essential direction and counsel to the student officers. Selection for all military staff assignments should be based upon completion of the College course, personal popularity and "all-around so-called good 'practical' Service reputation." These requirements were deemed essential to counteract any latent opposition to the College.

¹⁹ Navy Department, General Order 472, 27 May 1919. This directive established the number of naval staff billets.

Sims to Secretary of Navy, 22 August 1921, Naval War College Archives, Record Group 2: Administrative Records, 1894-1945, (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG 2). At this later date when Sims sought to expand his staff to include officers from other services, he indicated his belief that the original thirteen billets pertained solely to naval line officers.

²⁰ Edward L. Beach and John V. Noel, Jr., Naval Terms Dictionary, Third Edition, (Annapolis, 1971), 115. A senior naval officer, above the rank of captain, authorized to fly a personal flag containing a number of stars appropriate to his rank.

Finally, Sims maintained that he should be permitted to select his staff and that officers so designated should remain at the College for a minimum of six months.

Though aware of possible Department or personal opposition from the officers he might designate for the College staff, Sims nonetheless submitted his list of preferred selections.²¹

Sims decried the lack of continuity in the College administration, fostered by the regular detachment of the military staff members during the course of the academic year. To ameliorate this problem, he recommended appointment of civilian assistants to the military department heads, as well as an experienced librarian and a competent statistician to administer the College archives and records. The latter two staff members would constitute an embryonic "intelligence section" to

²¹Sims to Secretary of Navy, 15 January 1919, ibid. Sims' nominees were as follows: "Section 1. Schofield and Knox, probably both, Command; 2. C. S. Williams or Andrews and Phelps or Stirling, Strategy; 3. Twining and McNamee, Tactics; 4. Evans and Dawes or Coffey, Correspondence; V. C. S. Williams or Andrews or Phelps, Pye and H. D. Cooke, Exec. and Admin. Dept.; Aide to be selected later."

Sims was particularly anxious to obtain Pye's services, adding that "Pye's detail very important both owing to knowledge of College and experience of this war." Of those officers nominated only Knox, Phelps, McNamee, and Dawes arrived at this time. Williams, already at the College, was detached shortly before classes resumed. He would return in 1922 to succeed Sims in the College presidency.

maintain complete information on naval matters. The civilian assistant in the major departments would assure continuous contact with the general academic community while assisting student officers destined for higher command and flag rank to develop an understanding of responsible relationships with other government agencies and commercial-industrial organizations. Noting that many phases of a naval officer's education were neglected presently, Sims believed that the civilian assistants, through expertise in political science, economics, trade relations, and international law, would expand the student officer's educational background.²²

To supplement the work of the civilian academics, Sims advocated re-establishment and expansion of the College lecture program. In this way, recognized authorities in various academic disciplines would increase the relevancy of the College experience. This lecture program would complement a similar effort in the professional area wherein military staff members and

²²Ibid. Financial limitations might hamper recruitment of these civilian specialists, Sims believed, but the Navy should be prepared to pay a minimum beginning salary of \$2,500 per annum with an annual increase of ten per cent up to the fifth year. This salary was consonant with prevailing salary ranges in civilian institutions. At the end of the fifth year, when warranted, these specialists would be promoted to an associate professorship with a salary of \$3,500 to \$4,000 per annum.

invited military specialists spoke on matters relevant to the naval profession.

4

When the College was reactivated in 1919, it consisted of a single building--the War College building--completed in May, 1892, at a cost of \$75,000.²³ The structure had been used previously for administrative offices, classrooms, and quarters for staff officers and their families. The projected postwar plans for the College meant that additional space would be required. Since funds for new construction were scarce, Sims was willing to accept feasible alterations to the War College building.²⁴ As a result, office space expanded at the expense of officer quarters and the print shop,

²³The building was renamed Luce Hall in 1934. At the time of its initial occupancy the College staff numbered five officers and eighteen student officers.

²⁴Secretary of Navy to Bureau of Yards and Docks, 15 February 1919, NA-RG 80, Box 501. Twenty thousand dollars were made available for modification projects.

Chief of Naval Operations to Bureau of Yards and Docks, 24 February 1919, ibid. Chief of Naval Operations instructions regarding modifications reveal that "no quarters are to be retained in the building."

Sims to Major General Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps, 17 July 1919, ibid. Removal of officer quarters from the College building eliminated the security provided by the presence of resident officers; hence, Sims requested that marines be detailed to provide security, fire and safety protection as well as assuring "a reliable messenger service."

chart collection, and overflow of the library were relocated. New building construction remained more than ten years in the future.

Admiral Sims viewed the College library as a particularly vital resource in the instructional program. Throughout the 1884-1917 period, the magnitude and diversity of the library's holdings provided a valuable support to the College program. During the deactivation period, accessions continued to be received regularly. As a result, when classes resumed, the library holdings were in satisfactory condition although space problems were materializing.

Throughout his presidency, Admiral Sims sought to strengthen the library program through additions to staff or available space. Maintenance of a professional staff was an on-going problem compounded by increasing financial austerity. Sims' appeal to Theodore Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, to restore salary reductions levied against the librarians reflects his genuine interest in developing a first-class professional library.²⁵

²⁵ Sims to Theodore Roosevelt, 27 August 1921, NWCA-RG 2. In discussing the salary and status of the librarian (Dr. Edwin Wiley), Sims emphasized that the latter "should not be confused with the librarianship of enlisted mens' libraries and those of minor naval stations." The College librarian was "a man who combines the expert knowledge of library science, a special knowledge of the literature, history and techniques of

While acknowledging that the College "was not in satisfactory condition" and that proposals submitted two years earlier to the Secretary of Navy remained largely unimplemented, Sims voiced specific concern to Roosevelt about the treatment afforded the civilian salaried staff. He noted that the librarian's annual salary (\$3,000) was approximately \$1,000 below that of professional colleagues in nearby colleges and universities. Unless the condition was corrected, Sims believed the College curriculum would suffer.

5

In his projected program, Sims considered Command, Strategy, and Tactics as the mainstream of the curriculum. As planned, Command studies would examine naval doctrine, art of command, staff duties, and organization/administration, including situation estimates, plan making, and order formulation. Strategy course work would involve policy making, logistics, international law, and chart maneuvers. In the area of tactics, screening and scouting functions (plus regular use of the game board) would be emphasized.

naval and military science, of international law, and, in addition, must be capable of translating material on these subjects from French, German, Spanish, Italian, and other modern languages." In Sims' view, the librarian's position was "of equal importance with that of the librarian of the Naval Academy and the Library Specialist of the Bureau of Navigation"--both of whom received higher salaries than Wiley (who resigned a year later).

Two other program activities of the College were also reactivated at this time: the Correspondence Course and Fleet-War College sessions. While the Correspondence Course had continued to function on a reduced basis during the war, resumption of the Fleet-War College sessions marked renewal of the linkup between the two activities. It was the presence of this contact that had been a major argument for establishment of the College in Newport. The sessions were held annually, usually in late summer or early autumn, at which time the fleet operating schedule normally brought it into Narragansett Bay and environs. The sessions, extending over a two-week period and constituting a compressed version of the College course, were offered in the War College building by staff members to officer personnel of the visiting units.²⁶

Although a major institutional function of an earlier period--the preparation of war plans--had been removed to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, the College because of its experience and capability would continue to contribute to the planning activities

²⁶The actual lengths of the Fleet-War College sessions were determined by the fleet's operating schedule. Variations in time available and number of units present characterized this College program. As the 1920 decade progressed and the fleet size contracted or was otherwise involved, the regularity of the sessions was modified to shorter periods (sometimes to one day in duration) and for smaller number of units.

of that office through annual submission of student theses, solutions to assigned problems, and estimates of the world situation, as well as through independent and/or assigned project work.²⁷

6

Admiral Sims' proposals for reactivation of the College were forwarded to the Secretary of Navy through the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral William S. Benson. In his forwarding comments, Benson concurred generally with Sims' projections.²⁸ However, he demurred on a Sims' recommendation that College personnel needs (staff and student officers) should take precedence

²⁷Costello, General Board, 11, pp. 117-118. This author believes that during the early years the College's contribution to the Navy's readiness posture had been very limited, "but it planted the seed for additional growth in the direction of a war planning organization within the departmental hierarchy" By 1911, however, General Board requests for assistance from the Naval War College became so voluminous that the staff protested to Admiral Raymond P. Rodgers, the College president. He requested the General Board to either augment his staff or eliminate the College's role in war planning which was seen as impeding its role as an educational institution.

No remedial action was forthcoming from the General Board until Secretary of Navy George Meyer directed the General Board "to call on the Naval War College for assistance only if it did not affect their educational mission." While this directive reduced General Board requests to the College, it was not until establishment of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations that the College was removed formally from war planning.

²⁸Benson to Secretary of Navy, first endorsement, 23 January 1919, to Sims letter, 15 January 1919, ibid.

over the wishes of the individual officer. Reasonable consideration should be given to the officer's preference. He noted that several of Sims' staff nominees were long overdue for sea duty and their career patterns might well be jeopardized at this time by assignment to the Naval War College. These officers must first be permitted to obtain sea commands. Finally, Benson agreed that the College president should be relieved of collateral duties unrelated to institutional operations though he hedged on Sims' request for additional funds to expand existing physical facilities pending determination of the College's "permanent" location.²⁹

7

In the weeks following his return to Newport, Sims sought to wield his proposed organization into reality. Amidst the confusion attendant the College reactivation, he and Mrs. Sims went about setting up their household. Upon their return to Newport, the Sims' had returned to their home on Kay Street.

However, shortly thereafter (with a view to an eventual retirement residence) they leased a home on Rhode Island Avenue, intending to sublease the premises while they occupied government quarters near the

²⁹This issue had arisen regularly throughout the existence of the College. It would surface again the following year as well as in the early 1930's before "final" resolution.

College building.³⁰ In the weeks ahead, the Sims' and their children, together with their household staff, worked to change "the president's house" into a home.³¹ The countless chores attending this project were ably directed by Mrs. Sims. The major portion of this phase of the College reactivation was undertaken without the direct assistance of Admiral Sims.³² He spent most of May (1919) touring midwest states on a "Victory Bond" drive. Throughout these appearances, Sims was received enthusiastically. As expected, he relished the recognition the tour provided. He entered into the assignment with characteristic gusto, losing his voice for several days at one point of the tour.

³⁰Newport Daily News, May 17, 1919.

³¹E. C. Seibert, Acting Public Works Officer, Naval Training Station, Newport, R.I., to Sims, 25 April 1919, Sims Papers, Container 25. To assist the Sims in refurbishment of the house, \$1,850 had been made available for papering, window shades, rugs and various sundries. However, "the funds for recovering the mattresses are not approved."

³²Sims to Secretary of Navy (Bureau of Navigation), 11 August 1919, NA-RG 24, Box 76. Sims did enter into the household staffing task by seeking authorized, competent personnel. While he had requested "one good English-speaking mess attendant, first class," he had received a "third class, scarcely speaking English." Another request brought little improvement, a third-class mess attendant, who "has had some experience on board ship and speaks English at least better than the first arrival." Sims next earnestly requested the Department to send "a mess attendant, first class, preferably a colored man, speaking English."

Finally, early in June, 1919, the reactivation preparations ended and formal classes resumed. Sims and his staff began the task of implementing the plans. Crucial to this planning had been Sims' conception of the mission of the College. In actuality, the College mission would be derived from the fundamental naval policy requiring that the Department maintain a state of material and personnel readiness to handle any naval threat to the national security. As part of its personnel readiness program, the Department policy required establishment of "training" programs to assure a steady input of qualified personnel. The Naval War College had been established as a major element in the professional preparation of naval officers. In this way, achievement of the College mission would contribute to fulfillment of the Department mission.

In developing his plan for the reactivation of the College, Sims revealed his conception of the College mission and the need for its nature to be understood thoroughly throughout the naval service.³³ He recommended

That the Service be made to understand very definitely by a General Order that the Mission of the College is purely educational. This fact is understood by the majority of those who attended the College and by those who are in

³³Sims to Secretary of Navy, 15 January 1919, ibid.

sympathy with the College. Unfortunately, however, I find that there is a misunderstanding on the part of many influential officers in the service concerning this subject. They insist on attempting to show concrete results accomplished by the College, or rather, to show that there have been no such results. The Service at large should understand that the aim of the College is to cause Officers to educate themselves in many lines which the unavoidable limitations of the course at the Academy and the routine duties at sea prevent. It should be well understood by the Service that the College is in no sense a plan-making body, nor has it any administrative or executive functions. It is solely a post-graduate course for Naval Officers along the lines above mentioned. The results which it accomplishes are not subject to specific compilation or statement.

Sims realized that his plan for the College would require efficient and effective utilization of available material and manpower resources. Since the College objectives lacked precise determination, any assessment of the extent to which the College was fulfilling its mission in the years ahead would prove inconclusive. Similarly, as the program evolved, succeeding College presidents would shift programmatic emphasis without relating the impact of the new emphasis on the continuing fulfillment of the mission.

On June 2, 1919, the thirty-one student officers,³⁴ staff members, and guests--assembled in the Training

³⁴Naval War College, Register of Officer, 1884-1968, (Newport, 1968), 23, (hereafter cited as Register of Officers). Over two-thirds of the convening class held the rank of naval captain. Two Army officers (a colonel and major and one Marine officer completed the class.) Included in the student body were Captain J.R.P. Pringle--a future president of the College (1927-1930)--

Station Barracks "B" Gymnasium--listened attentively as Sims reiterated his beliefs and aspirations concerning the College.³⁵ By way of introduction, he pointed out that since the College was "not a college in the ordinary sense of the term . . . perhaps it would have been better if it had never been so designated." In support of this belief, Sims noted analogously that the College supported no particular denomination, promulgated no fixed policy, and maintained no permanent administrative and instructional staff.

The Naval War College, Sims insisted, was part of the Fleet and existed only for the Fleet. Stressing the narrowing mission of the College since its founding days, Sims added that "in reality this assembly is nothing but a board of practical Fleet officers brought

and Captain J. K. Taussig, commanding officer of the first group of American warships to reach European waters in the recent war.

When operations resumed in June, 1919, a new Department directive had doubled the class size. An earlier general order had provided for two classes annually, each to consist of fifteen student officers. Now with the annual input increased to sixty officers, new strains would be placed on available facilities, resources, and staff. This expansion pleased Sims who believed the College experience necessary to an effective and productive naval career. However, in the years ahead the needs of the naval service would frequently prevent attainment of the authorized enrollment.

³⁵Sims, Opening Address, 2 June 1919, NWCA, Record Group 16: Addresses, 1894-1965, (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG 16).

together here to discuss and decide the extremely important question of how we would best conduct naval war under the various conditions that might arise." Students brought their collective experience to the College where it was examined in connection with the principles of warfare. Unlike earlier statements wherein he had noted the College's objective had been to define and develop these principles, Sims now said "these principles are nothing but deductions from the accumulated experience of those who have gone before us, including, of course, the acknowledged masters of the art."³⁶

Sims expressed the hope that when the student officers concluded their studies they would have acquired confidence in their ability to estimate a situation correctly, to reach a logical decision, and to prepare plans and orders that would assure successful accomplishment of the mission. This ability, Sims

³⁶The principles of warfare are considered in numerous publications dealing with military and naval science. Although often expanded numerically for special purposes, the nine principles are identified as: surprise, objective, movement, economy of force, superiority, cooperation, offensive, security, and simplicity.

Brodie considers these hallowed "principles" (*italics Brodie*) as "essentially common sense propositions which are generally but by no means exclusively pertinent to the waging of war." Bernard Brodie, Strategy in the Missile Age, Paperback edition, (Princeton, 1965), pp. 23-24.

concluded, could only be acquired through persistent practice. Many strategic and tactical problems, culminating at the war game board, would provide this essential reinforcement.

Sims recognized clearly the problems attending reactivation of the College. Most important, however, he knew that the College's success depended on strong, continuous support at the Department level. Previous relations between Sims and Daniels, proper and cool, would become increasingly abrasive. During the next few years these strong personalities would clash on important phases of Department policy and War College implementation. Consequently, in this, his last command, Sims would attempt to move the College through a difficult period, intensified by strong personal and professional differences with civilian and military colleagues. Though this command was removed from the vicissitudes of sea service, the Naval War College presidency would be as demanding as any command Sims ever assumed.

CHAPTER III

THE COLLEGE RESUMES OPERATIONS: 1919-1922

As the 1920 decade began the world powers continued to seek adjustments to the new political, economic and social orders resulting from the First World War. Prior to 1914 Europe had been the source of the basic political ideas and institutions of the modern world. With the war's end, the premises of the old order were thoroughly questioned, partly because of the war trauma and partly because of the impact of the Russian revolution. A number of new governments were established, characterized by a liberal disposition unknown to their predecessors. None of these new governmental forms had had significant experience with the political methods necessary to make the structures viable. In the time ahead these deficiencies boded ill for both normal operations and tranquil transitions of power.

The Treaty of Versailles only ended battlefield hostilities between the war participants. The scene of battle shifted from the military to the economic front. Military and naval weapons ceased to fire on November 11, 1918, but economic weapons continued to operate

unrelentlessly. These slow, subtle and unspectacular weapons--market exploitation, currency manipulation, exchange control, tariff, quotas, self-sufficiency programs, and various outright imperialistic ventures--were nonetheless deadly in the destruction of national welfare. Political nationalism and economic nationalism became twin weapons in the worldwide postwar reconversion struggle.

Few political leaders comprehended the extent to which the world war had disrupted the world social order. Upon cessation of hostilities, initial attempts were made to impose the old order. They were doomed to failure as the war had spawned new, influential political and economic ideologies. Yet the struggle for viable solutions went forward. In September, 1939, the nations would return to the battlefield to realign political and economic power.

During the years immediately following the Armistice, Americans also began to react to the forces of change released by the recent war. To this situation, they brought a naivete and inexperience which complicated efforts to achieve peaceful social change. As the world powers bickered over the harvest of victory and sought means to avoid repetition of the recent carnage, Americans acquired fresh insights into the causes of the war, the generally inept political and military

leadership that nurtured its continuance, and the machinations that accompanied the peace settlement. Slowly, America would withdraw from the threshold of active world leadership and assume the role of neutral but interested observer.

World events continued to dominate America's public interest in the early postwar years. However, domestic issues slowly regained national attention. The beginning of the 1920 decade brought the conclusion of the Wilson administration and the inauguration of the Harding presidency. Before Wilson's departure, the nation had experienced the trauma of the "Red Scare" and the impact of inflation and unemployment on the national economy. In the years of the Harding "normalcy" Americans would face a revival of nativism, the problem of prohibition, the question of immigration restriction, the return of fundamentalism, the rise of gangsterism and political corruption, and a substantially changed life style--accelerated by a returning economic prosperity and widening technological development. In short, Americans, wearied of the morality effort demanded by the war and the earlier Progressive movement, would choose to shelve efforts to reform society and would concentrate increasingly on money-making and recreational pursuits.

While Sims was busy reactivating the Naval War College, the Navy Department was similarly engaged in shaping its postwar organization and objectives. This alignment process was difficult due to political and economic factors. Complex to an extreme, these factors were compounded by scientific and technical advances within the military and naval professions. The resulting instabilities led to intra- and inter-service disputes involving the most effective way to structure the military and naval establishments.

With the end of the war the Navy Department began to determine its proper postwar organizational balance. For several reasons attainment of this objective would be difficult. Institutionally it had experienced, in the recent past, two major transitions (expansion and demobilization) in approximately three years. The magnitude of these shifts necessitated a smoothly functioning organization to facilitate vital planning, organizing and controlling of the postwar navy. Furthermore, political and economic demands surrounding the expansion and demobilization efforts created pressures which distorted values essential to sound, orderly administrative practices. As a result of operational experience and technical developments during the war, changes also occurred in military and naval capabilities

which would require thorough examination in order to devise effective postwar military and naval organizations.

With the cessation of hostilities, Secretary of Navy Daniels began to direct his attention to the posture of the postwar Navy. The Navy of 1919 bore little resemblance to the Navy of 1916. Neither would resemble the Navy of 1926. The problem of maintaining a Navy "second to none" was compounded further by the fluctuating number of available vessels and personnel as well as by the constancy and substance of congressional support.

The recent war had revealed the essential role to be filled by aircraft and submarines in any future conflict. While remarkable advances were also recorded in ordnance and materiel, the performance of aircraft and submarines was a harbinger of changing military capabilities. Military organizational structure and function would have to accommodate these advances if assigned missions were to be accomplished.

During the 1920-1925 period--while Admirals Sims and Williams occupied the Naval War College presidency--the Navy worked strenuously to assure development of naval aviation. Advances in submarine technology were less marked. For a few years in the decade the very existence of the Navy would be challenged by disciples

of Brigadier General "Billy" Mitchell who would consign navies to oblivion. However, the vision and efforts of naval leaders, plus interested civilian supporters, assured development of a navy essentially responsive to national security responsibilities.

As a major departmental component of the executive branch, the Navy has an on-going obligation to be ready when called upon. This requirement means a clear and accurate assessment of the capabilities of self, friend, and possible foe. The employment of one's own capability, through strategic and tactical utilization of available resources, is directed to attainment of national policy goals.

By 1920 the United States had experienced the status of a world power for no more than a quarter of a century. Inexperience in international affairs resulted in a scarcity of leaders with vision and talent upon which to draw in the development of a sound, workable national policy. The military and naval policies, derivatives of the national policy, would reflect this incertitude.¹ Since military and naval capabilities

¹The extent of this condition is discussed in Fred Greene, "The Military View of American National Policy, 1904-1940," American Historical Review, LXVI (January, 1961), pp. 354-377. Professor Greene notes that "the army and navy repeatedly complained about the lack of guidance they received from the White House of the State Department concerning American national policy." The American military and naval planners were forced

must be constantly updated, the efforts of the Navy in this regard during the interwar period are a record of commendable professionalism in the light of political and economic cross-currents.

The development of an effective Navy requires determination of a naval policy and a plan for its implementation. Since the Navy operates in two major social climates--war and peace--the nature of its organization must be sufficiently flexible to meet both exigencies. This condition involves a maintenance of a core structure in peace time, expandable in time of war. The basic American apathy toward the military establishment--present throughout most of the interwar period--as well as a national inexperience in wartime mobilization hampered formation of a military structure along lines deemed necessary by military and naval leaders.²

"to fall back on their own resources in defining our national policy, national interests, and position in national affairs . . . led them to stress the importance of prudence."

²In the interwar years American naval leaders struggled with the problems of strategic policy making and planning. Although Secretary of Navy Daniels had unsuccessfully opposed establishment of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in 1915, he had prevented the creation of a War Plans Division within the new activity. Not until Daniels had left office was a War Plans Division formed. "It was not until 1936 that the Navy found enough moral courage and officer personnel to establish billets for War Plans officers on the staffs of the principal Fleet, Force, and subordinate seagoing commands and on the shoreside staffs . . . " In 1941, for the first time, the designation began to appear in command rosters. Vice Admiral George C.

Naval planning in the interwar years was hampered by the absence of a workable naval policy. Secretary of Navy Denby decried the lack of "definitely enunciated policies which could be followed by all concerned." In an effort to clarify this policy for the postwar period, the Navy's General Board undertook to revise the policy. After due deliberation, which included consultation with the bureau chiefs, Naval War College, and major commands, the General Board forwarded its recommendations to the Secretary of Navy. The Board recommended that the fundamental naval policy of the United States should require that "the Navy of the United States should be maintained in sufficient strength to support its policies and its commerce, and to guard its continental and overseas possessions." From this basis, the General Board developed a general naval policy designed to reflect recent disarmament decisions: "To create, maintain, and operate a Navy second to none

Dyer, The Amphibians Came to Conquer: The Story of Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, (Washington, 1971), p. 153.

Additional comment on Navy war planning during 1919-1941 is contained in Vice Admiral George C. Dyer, On the Treadmill to Pearl Harbor: The Memoirs of Admiral James O. Richardson, USN, (Ret.), (Washington, 1973) pp. 251-306, (hereafter cited as Treadmill); Admiral Ernest J. King and Walter Muir Whitehill, Fleet Admiral King, (New York, 1952), (hereafter cited as Fleet Admiral).

and in conformity with the ratios for capital ships established by the treaty for limitations of naval armaments."³

In earlier studies, the General Board (cognizant of the Japanese success in the 1904-1905 war with Russia) had assessed the probability of American success in a war with Japan.⁴ Many of these deliberations had taken place at the Naval War College prior to the establishment of the Office of Chief of Naval Operations in 1915. The General Board had concluded in 1917 that a war with Japan could be won with a fleet double the size of the Japanese fleet and with strongly fortified Philippine and Guam bases. These conditions were not fulfilled at any time prior to December, 1941.

Japanese naval strength continued to grow in the interwar period. American inability to keep pace with this expansion appears in the 1922 declaration of the General Board: "The power of the United States to

³Navy Department, Annual Reports--1922, pp. 2-3.

⁴These early deliberations had led to the formulation--in conjunction with Army planners--of the first ORANGE war plan: "a statement of principles which, it was piously hoped, could be followed in the event of war." By 1913, however, "the strategic principles of the plan had been exhaustively studied and were well understood." For a brief, lucid account of War Plan ORANGE, see Louis Morton, "War Plan Orange: Evolution of a Strategy," World Politics, XI (January, 1959), pp. 221-250.

prepare to defend its interests or unaided to enforce its policies in the western Pacific" has been lessened greatly.⁵ A year later, the study was updated to reflect the influence of the Washington naval disarmament conference. The Board included in this latter assessment an outline of the steps necessary to defeat Japan militarily and the action required to assure a strong naval posture in event of hostilities.⁶

In elaboration of the general naval policy, the General Board, at the direction of the Secretary of Navy, developed and maintained a number of detailed subsidiary policies. Of particular relevance to this study was the policy dealing with the education and training of naval personnel. In this regard the Department personnel policy would be "to maintain the personnel

⁵Navy Department, General Board, No. 420-2, Serial 1108, 29 March 1922, Operational Archives Branch, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C., (hereafter cited as OAB-NHC).

⁶Navy Department, General Board, No. 425, Serial 1136, 26 April 1923, ibid. To achieve this naval posture the General Board urged the maintenance of the 5-5-3 ratio with Japan in all classes of fighting ships and personnel; extension of base facilities near Honolulu; construction of all vessels with capability to operate trans-Pacifically; utilize every legitimate measure to build up Guam and Manila so that they could hold out until reinforcements would arrive; preparation for reinforcement of Manila Bay; recapture of Manila Bay; occupation or control of all naval positions in the mandates and Philippines.

Additional policies recommended development of peace strategy toward immediate naval action in the western Pacific on the outbreak of war; provision for

at the highest standard and in sufficient numbers to carry out the building, replacement and operations policy" as well as "to develop and coordinate systematic courses of instruction and training of officers, petty officers, and enlisted men."⁷ To prepare selected naval officers to implement the existing naval policy from their positions of high command would be the basic mission of the Naval War College, functioning as the capstone of the Navy's educational system.

The Department assessment of its postwar direction included examination of its existing educational program for line officers.⁸ An evaluation board--chaired by

mobile upkeep, docking and repair equipment for distant operations; maintain a ready expeditionary force, and foster good relations with possible benevolent neutrals such as Holland, Russia, or China.

⁷Navy Department, Annual Reports--1933, pp. 34-35. The basic naval policy continued virtually unaltered during the interwar period. For example, the statement cited represents no change from the naval policies approved earlier in 1922, 1928, and 1931.

⁸The Naval War College was not the Navy's sole advanced educational program. A postgraduate school, specializing in engineering, aerology, and ordnance, had been established informally at the Naval Academy in June, 1909, where it remained until its relocation in Monterrey, California, in December, 1951. The administrative and operational experiences of this institution are examined in Rilling, First Fifty Years.

In addition to the Naval War College and the Naval Postgraduate School, naval officers were nominated regularly, then as now, to graduate studies in specialized fields at public and private universities. This work was frequently a continuation of studies initiated at the Postgraduate School. A contemporary review of Navy

Captain D. W. Knox, and assisted by Commanders Ernest J. King and W. S. Pye--convened early in 1919 to develop an educational program that would provide the professional schooling required throughout their careers. The board developed a four-phase educational program based on initial study at the Naval Academy. Later inputs would come from the general line course (Postgraduate school) and junior (to be established) and senior War College courses. During this career progression, the naval officer's responsibility level would move from division officer, through department head and ship commander, to commander of small and large groups of ships. Finally, the board delineated the objectives of each career phase, the supportive course work and its content, and the eligibility requirements for attendance.⁹

postgraduate education during the 1920's appears in A.N. Granum, "Postgraduate Instruction," USNIP 55 (July, 1929), pp. 595-601.

A comprehensive treatment of American military and naval education and training as it had developed by the late 1950's is contained in Masland and Radway, Soldiers and Scholars.

⁹Navy Department, "Report and Recommendations of a Board appointed by the Bureau of Navigation regarding the Instruction and Training of Line Officers," USNIP, 46 (August, 1920), pp. 1265-1292, (hereafter cited as Report and Recommendations).

The basic report prepared by the Knox board disappeared from Navy Department files within three years of its submission. King and Whitehill, Fleet Admiral, p. 150.

The Knox board believed so strongly in its recommendations, it urged that the program be made obligatory (except in the general line course where the present shortage of junior officers created special problems). The board estimated that any given time, under the recommended program, approximately nine per cent of the Navy's commissioned line officers would be attending courses exclusive of the Naval Academy.

The Knox board projection remained the basic frame of reference for the Navy's advanced education and training program throughout the interwar period. Its proposal to establish a junior course at the Naval War College provided additional support to the College's efforts to establish a course meeting the educational needs of officers with more than fifteen years service. While the Bureau of Navigation approved the board's recommendations, postwar austerity reduced its implementation to a piecemeal process.

2

Initially Sims did not plan any drastic revision in the College's traditional academic program or instructional methodology.¹⁰ While the course content

¹⁰ Although the College administration was free to develop its curriculum, the General Board and the Chief of Naval Operations frequently suggested specific components.

would be updated to include the experiences of the First World War as well as the advances in science and technology relevant to the military and naval establishments, the study routine continued to be structured around selected readings and lectures (professional and academic) designed to expand the student officer's understanding of history, particularly military and naval varieties; oral presentations and thesis writing ("an expository exercise leading to a systematic digest of the subject"); problem-solving ("to develop the practical application of principles"); maneuvers (test and indicate the methods by which these principles may be applied with maximum success), and critiques and conferences (to coordinate thought and ideas).¹¹

The College curriculum, structured around naval command, strategy and tactics, quickly introduced the student officer to the "applicatory method" (or deductive system of reasoning) long espoused by the College.¹² Using this methodology, the student officer

¹¹Captain W. W. Phelps, "The U.S. Naval War College Course," 8 September 1921, NWCA-RG 13. At this time, Captain Phelps, Naval War College Chief of Staff, was addressing the Fleet-War College Session.

¹²Sims to Secretary of Navy, 5 January 1921, NWCA-RG 2. Sims disputed earlier contentions that this method had not been adopted until 1914. He maintained that the system (as well as individual and in-depth problem-solving, combined with thesis writing) had been established during the presidency of Captain W. L. Rodgers, (1911-1913). It was during the Rodgers

analyzed specific problems cast in actual conditions rather than solely reading treatises or holding discussions on abstract principles. This technique, disdaining reliance upon lectures, was not unknown in the colleges and universities of the period. Where extant, it was called problem-solving, the case method, or the scientific method. In essence the College's methodology stressed a four-phase analytical sequence: (1) estimating the situation; (2) formulating the orders;

presidency, according to Sims, that "the institution became in reality a college, with a continuing student body in which individual work and development was (sic) a prominent object." Previous work had been "somewhat casual and intermittent in nature" with "work done primarily with a view to development of principles . . . but with the abolition of conferences and the advent of longer courses, the primary mission of the College became "the education and training of officers as individuals in the art of conducting war."

John Hattendorf indicates that Rodgers, in turn, had observed the "applicatory method" while attending the Army War College. See Lieutenant John B. Hattendorf, "Technology and Strategy: A Study in the Professional Thought of the U.S. Navy, 1900-1916," NWC Review, XXIV (November, 1971), p. 30.

A. H. Van Keuren to J. B. Edmonson, 3 December 1926, NWCA-RG 2. At this time Captain Van Keuren prepared a detailed exposition of the "applicatory method" and its relationship to Naval War College studies (in response to Edmonson's request on behalf of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Also, Charles W. Cullen, "From the Kriegs-academie to the Naval War College: The Military Planning Process," NWC Review, XXII (September, 1970), pp. 6-18. Lieutenant Commander Cullen has developed a brief, clear treatment of the roots of the College's "applicatory method" and its relationship to the planning process.

(3) maneuvering the situation; and (4) criticizing the estimate, order and maneuver. Through application of this methodology to an assigned mission, the student officer was expected to increase his competency to reach effective decisions and to devise appropriate plans, orders, and control measures.

The "applicatory method" required the student officer--ever mindful of the assigned mission--to initiate his estimate of the situation with a thorough examination of existing relevant literature and to integrate it with the professional and academic lectures. This input provided the student officer with the background information necessary to assess the enemy's probable mission and course of action. From this point, the student officer (again cognizant of his own position and capability) determined his own course of action.¹³

¹³The order formulation process represented a major contribution of the College to development of a sound command system in the Navy. The format promoted brevity, clarity, definiteness and positiveness. Pervading the order was the spirit of mutual confidence between commander and subordinate. Although healthy initiative was seen as born of mutual confidence, inherent in the "applicatory method" was the requisite that subordinates must be uncritical of the orders of a superior, once issued. The subordinate could best contribute to accomplishment of the mission by placing himself in the commander's frame of reference and by acting as he believed the commander wished the implementation to occur.

The student officer next formulated his decision into an order. The College methodology required definite procedural steps to be followed in order formulation: a listing of the task organization, the basic task, the communications and logistics requirements, and concluded with a designation of those activities to whom copies of the order should be distributed.

With the estimate of the situation completed and the orders formulated to accomplish the mission, the student officer moved to the third phase of his problem-solving experience: maneuvering the solution and, when so formulated, war gaming. The latter method of resolving 'conflict situations' constituted a learning experience since the College's earliest days.¹⁴

¹⁴Because of their early awareness of the importance of war gaming, the military services of the major powers were among the first users of this form of decision-making. William McCarty Little--the 'father' of war gaming at the College--introduced the subject in 1887 to the College program.

For a good account of early Naval War College efforts at war gaming as well as the distinctive contribution of William McCarty Little, see Ronald Spector, Professors of War, pp. 125-162. Spector's volume covers the College history during the period 1884-1914.

A publication integrating the principles of war gaming and the Naval War College experience is the Naval War College's Fundamentals of War Gaming, 2nd edition (Newport, 1961), C-1, C-7. This publication embodies the accumulated experience of Francis J. McHugh, Operations Research Analyst, War Gaming Department. Mr. McHugh has been on the College staff for over thirty-five years

The fourth and final phase of the College's instructional methodology involved critical appraisal of the estimate, order and maneuver. This critique, held in a conference of the participants, fostered free and uninhibited discussion of the solution reached as well as optional courses of action. It was felt generally by the College staff that this cross-fertilization broadened the student officer's perspective.

In espousing its "applicatory" method of instruction, the College administration believed many benefits accrued to the student officer's professionalism. Essentially, the methodology was conceived as developing qualities of strong military character: thorough judgment, effective command, and positive leadership. The resultant uniformity of thought and action led, under repeated exercise, to correct application of these principles and to an approximate agreement in judgment and decision. In time, commander and subordinate would be of one mind. Finally, the system was viewed as developing

and gave this writer generously of his time to explain the development of war gaming during the 'modern' period (1930's and thereafter) of the Naval War College.

Basic publications within a growing body of literature on war gaming include Donald F. Featherstone, Naval War Games: Fighting Sea Battles with Model Ships (London, 1965). Featherstone has been a productive writer in the area of war gaming. In this publication he examines the fundamental principles of war gaming as well as model construction to achieve greater realism.

a form of naval doctrine; that is, the uniform or common conception of the application of the principles of warfare which would lead to coordination and unity of command.¹⁵

3

In addition to mastering the essence of the "applicatory method" as a prelude to "sound military decisions," the student officer was required to prepare several theses--particularly in the area of strategy and tactics.¹⁶ When other operational areas became sufficiently important to the College program to require departmentation, a thesis requirement would be added to

¹⁵Indeed, competency in using the uniform "applicatory method" was envisioned as leading to situations where the Commander-in-Chief, following this procedure would "state to his staff simply his resolution, his decision, leaving to his trained and indoctrinated staff simply to formulate his operation order around his resolution, the order to be executed by equally well-trained and indoctrinated subordinate commanders." Phelps, "The U.S. Naval War College Course," ibid.

¹⁶At this time student theses--more akin to short term papers--averaged 10-20 pages in length. As the decade progressed the theses increased in length until the 1930's when some theses exceeded 100 pages.

Buell believes that "the typical 1926 War College thesis was neither scholarly nor academically rigorous and would be regarded today as an informal treatise." Lieutenant Commander Thomas B. Buell, "Admiral Raymond A. Spruance and the Naval War College: Part II - From Student to Warrior," NWC Review, XXIII (April, 1971), p. 31.

that specialty. Thesis writing at the College sought essentially to synthesize the origin, development and pertinent relationships of a given subject the student officer encountered in the College program. In the early 1920's the number of theses varied but generally included policy, strategy, tactics, and command. The thesis requirement was eliminated in 1972.

In the 1920-1925 period, the strategy thesis required an analytical study of a specific naval campaign whereas the tactics thesis considered one or more famous naval battles (Jutland and Trafalgar would be the two most popular ones examined throughout the 1919-1941 period). Since a comprehensive examination of these selected campaigns and battles required the student officer to possess a firm knowledge of organization and administration, a Command thesis had been added. Finally, a fourth thesis--dealing with American policy--was required. When combined with the other theses, the final product was considered to constitute a treatise on the art of war.

Another major component of the College program was war gaming. This exercise consisted of two types: board and chart. The former was played manually, employing a game board to represent the area of operations (also called a "tactical naval game"); the latter, also a manual game, employed a chart (or map) to represent

the area of operations (also called a "strategic naval game"). In essence, the extent of the geographical area could dictate which type of war gaming would be used. In the war gaming exercise--whether by board, map or chart--the student officer's strategic or tactical plan was put to test. As restored in 1919, war gaming had to incorporate the strategic and tactical experiences of the First World War, while integrating the rapid advances in military and naval science and technology.

To prepare for his war gaming exercise, the student officer normally read several Department and College publications to familiarize himself with the rules, doctrines, and techniques of war gaming. This preparation was followed by elementary scouting and screening problems which provided him with the basic skills to approach more complicated exercises.

At this time, to embody the wartime experiences as well as pertinent scientific and technological advances, the Strategy and Tactics departments undertook revisions of their course content. The updated revisions incorporated the latest information available to assist the student officer in his war gaming and thesis writing assignments. The tactics course of study was overhauled drastically in response to improvements in ship types

and aircraft. Revision of instructional pamphlets in tactics was directed by the department head, Captain Luke McNamee (destined for the Naval War College presidency in 1933-1934).

Two other programmatic components were also reconstituted upon the College's reactivation: international law studies and the lecture series. The law studies, instituted in 1902, continued as before under Professor George G. Wilson of Harvard University; the lectures, an integral part of previous operations, continued with heavy military and naval emphasis--though a more academic flavor appeared as the decade progressed.

Due to the involvement of naval officers in American diplomatic matters, the College had pioneered in international law studies. These studies had made significant contributions in areas of marine warfare and the rights of belligerents and neutrals.¹⁷ As

¹⁷At a later date, Vice Admiral R. G. Colbert, then President of the Naval War College, reiterated the College's firm belief in the need to study international law. Citing Mahan's earlier arguments for such study, Colbert added that

if one is to command a man-of-war on the high seas, where to a substantial degree international law is the only law, the necessity for an awareness of an appreciation for the subject is rather obvious. In addition, the interrelationship of legal, political, economic, and social factors which are operative on a global scale and the increasing significance of our international commitments require a clear understanding of the rules governing the relations between states.

reinstated in 1919 the international law studies resumed the structure followed in the prewar years. In short, Professor Wilson and the College president met and agreed on the study topics for the upcoming academic year. Wilson then prepared the study guide and reference reading list which were distributed to the student officers at the initial class meeting. The student officers prepared solutions to the study problems, forwarded them to Wilson who prepared a lecture on the topic, synthesizing his solution with those of the students. Next, Professor Wilson held conferences with groups of student officers from which additional papers dealing with the subject topic emerged. Professor Wilson eventually integrated the information developed and the decision reached into the College's annual publication dealing with international law situations.¹⁸

The Chief of Naval Operations suggested the initial direction to the College's postwar studies in international law. He recommended revisions of the Department publication "Instructions for the Navy of the United States governing Maritime Warfare."¹⁹ These

Vice Admiral Richard G. Colbert, "Challenge," NWC Review XXI (January, 1969), pp. 1-2.

¹⁸Knight to Bureau of Navigation, 3 October 1914, NA-RG 24, Box 76.

¹⁹Chief of Naval Operations to Sims, 1 November 1919, NA-RG 80, Box 31.

instructions, drafted in June, 1917, had provided valuable guidance in the recent war. As a result, international law studies in the immediate postwar years were directed specifically to questions of contraband, visit and search, continuous voyage, and destruction of prizes.

4

As the College staff and student officers settled into the study routine, the quietude was broken in January, 1920, when the on-going disagreement between Secretary Daniels and Admiral Sims erupted into public print. The ensuing developments required Sims and several staff officers to spend a considerable amount of time away from Newport, testifying at congressional hearings in Washington, D.C.²⁰ The unwashed Navy linen was aired before the nation. Neither person enhanced his reputation as a result of the charges and counter-charges. At the time Daniels had but a year remaining of his secretaryship and Sims (who would retire in 1922) had to deny the Naval War College his presence for extended periods of time during the important re-activation period.

²⁰In addition to Sims, Captains H. I. Cone, Dudley Knox, and J. K. Taussig; Commanders J. B. Babcock, J. F. Daniels, and E. G. Allen, and Lieutenant Commander W. A. Edwards appeared before the congressional committee.

This embroglio arose over the famous medals controversy. In March, 1919, Secretary Daniels had appointed a board to identify naval officers eligible to receive various medals or other citations for wartime heroism or distinguished service. Rear Admiral Austin M. Knight, a former president of the Naval War College, was selected to head the board which would review all recommendations and prepare a list of approved award recipients. When the board released its list in October, 1919, Daniels questioned its accuracy and worked with the board to modify the identity and number of nominees.

Publication of the final approved list touched off a storm of protest. Sims joined the clamor, decrying the manner in which the list was prepared and alleging that the favoritism it reflected constituted another phase of Department mismanagement over the previous six years. The latter declaration expanded the medals controversy into areas of the Navy's preparedness for war as well as the effectiveness of Daniels' secretaryship. The acrimonious exchange continued throughout the next six months of hearings, the mutual disrespect of the two principals dominating the proceedings and frequently dividing senior officers of the Navy into rival supporting groups. This sentimental and professional

division did not terminate with the issuance, one year later, of the committee's vague, inconclusive report which lacked vindication of either principal.²¹

Institutional administration is a complex function rendered no easier at the Naval War College because of military dedication to order and self-discipline. Sims applied his incisive mind, broad experiential background, and strong record of accomplishment to the College's management needs. He understood well the necessity to install a workable organization, responsive to the Navy's changing needs, while providing for individual

²¹United States Senate, Naval Investigation, Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Naval Affairs, 2 vols., (Washington, 1921), and Report on the Naval Investigation, Subcommittee of the Committee on Naval Affairs, (Washington, 1921).

Additional comment on the hearings is contained in Morrison, Small-d Democrat, pp. 120-130; Morison, Admiral Sims, pp. 433-438; Cronon, Cabinet Diaries, pp. 456-457, and Kittredge, Naval Lessons, pp. 41-73. The latter author, a naval reserve officer who had served with Sims in London and later was appointed archivist at the Naval War College--exhibits an intense pro-Sims disposition.

John J. Halligan, Jr., to "Hutch" (H. I. Cone), 6 February 1920, Sims Papers, Container 76. At the height of this controversy, Admiral Halligan noted that it was "too bad the entire Navy is not behind him (Sims). Most of the officers junior to him are, but the older ones are shaking their heads. His qualities of courage and frankness appeal to youth but disturb his seniors."

In this regard, Sims' successor in the College presidency, Rear Admiral C. S. Williams, noted that "we all agree with what Sims means, but he doesn't say it." Morison, Admiral Sims, p. 510.

professional growth and personal satisfaction. Sims would meet each problem, new and old, with intelligence, candor, enthusiasm, and rectitude.

While Sims had reconciled himself that substantial expansion of the College's physical facilities would not occur in his time, he continued to struggle for increased operating funds,²² modifications in class composition and convening dates, staff selection, expansion of course work, and resolution of the permanent location for the College. These phases in the College development would be affected by a social climate rocked by issues of major political, economic and social significance.

The College's financial expenditures had inched upward to an annual amount of approximately \$60,000. Although increases would be sought, the austerity gripping government operations did not overlook the military and naval establishments. As a result, the entire operation from proposed ship and station construction through the spectrum of personnel education and training

²²Chief of Bureau of Navigation to Secretary of Navy, 5 June 1919, NA-RG 80, Box 501. This correspondence recommends adoption of Sims' proposal that the Naval War College budget for fiscal 1920 be increased from \$58,850 to \$90,950.

received careful scrutiny from Department and congressional watchdogs.²³

The problem of staff selection was a serious one, particularly during the early years of reactivation. Not only were officers tapped for staff duty unavailable--through personal choice or the demands of career patterns--but frequently officers who arrived for duty were detached before the normal two-year staff tour expired. This staff instability was particularly glaring during the initial academic year. Sims protested vigorously against this neglect, indicating that such premature detachment required him to draw upon student officers to perform staff duties pending arrival of a replacement--which frequently failed to materialize.²⁴

The contribution of the Naval War College in meeting the needs of the naval service, particularly the fleet, required that information supporting the College program be comprehensive and current. The adequacy of this information conditioned the validity of

²³Sims to Chief of Bureau of Navigation, 7 August 1922, NA-RG 24, Box 71. As the austerity theme continued to permeate the Department budget, Sims warned that further budgetary reductions would "impair institutional effectiveness." At this time, he was protesting a \$15,000 reduction in the College budget for fiscal 1924. Actual budget allocations had not increased measurably since fiscal 1920 despite expanding program needs.

²⁴Sims to Secretary of Navy, 19 August 1920, NA-RG 80, ibid.

decisions reached in war gaming and thesis writing. Sims and his successors recognized this need and moved early to place the College in the mainstream of communications between Department activities. However, persistent breakdowns would occur in this communication function throughout the interwar period.

In this regard Sims believed that the initial step required the appointment of a liaison officer to the College from within the Chief of Naval Operations' staff who would be detailed "in addition to his other duties to bear constantly in mind the needs of the War College. In this way, the War College would be kept fully informed regarding changes in policy, tactics, logistics, etc., and will be able to accomplish its mission more than if it were in ignorance."²⁵

Sims also realized that, if the College was to be responsive to the Navy's need for officers educated for higher command, the number of officers benefiting from attendance at Newport required an expansion in the size of the student body as well as in the sequence in which it was prepared. In 1919, the Department had

²⁵ Sims to Chief of Naval Operations, 10 June 1919, NA-RG 80, *ibid.* This plea would be re-echoed on numerous occasions throughout the next twenty years.

Chief of Naval Operations to Sims, 16 August 1919, *ibid.* Captain Harry E. Yarnell was appointed to this liaison duty.

expanded the single College course to include sixty officers per year. However, the officers reported in two groups of thirty officers, one group in June and the other in December. Writing to the Secretary of Navy, Sims indicated that the experience during his presidency revealed considerable duplication of administrative and staff effort, particularly in strategy and tactics instruction. In these areas the small size of the classes had prevented the playing of war games involving larger naval units.

To overcome this impediment Sims recommended that the class sequence be changed to one-a-year, to report during the early summer and to consist of sixty officers.²⁶ Sims believed that the College contribution would be enhanced by this action and that the Navy would be assured a sufficient number of officers prepared to handle positions of higher command. Sims had recommended earlier the creation of a junior or

²⁶Sims to Secretary of Navy, 18 March 1921, NWCA-RG 2.

A short time later Sims sought to enlarge the academic staff but the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation refused to approve such expansion. He reminded Sims that one of his earlier arguments for expanding the number of student officers had been to reduce duplication of staff effort; hence, the expansion of the student body was assumed to have solved the problem of staff size. Chief of Bureau of Navigation to Sims, 29 August 1921, NA-RG 24, Box 77.

preparatory course to be completed prior to enrollment in the principal College course.²⁷

In replying to Sims' recommendations, the Bureau of Navigation approved a convening date in early June, adding that strong efforts would be made to fill the class billets.²⁸ If the billets could not be filled in time for June, 1921, the Bureau promised definitely to have a full class for 1922 and thereafter. The Bureau agreed also that a May graduation date would provide additional 'lead time' for the Bureau to distribute the graduates throughout the fleet and to assemble a new class without undue haste.²⁹

²⁷Sims to Secretary of Navy, 15 January 1919, NA-RG 24. Writing from London at this time, Sims anticipated some phases of the Knox-King-Pye report on higher education for naval line officers.

Sims to Captain E. J. King, 23 December 1920, Sims Papers, Container 27. Based on a year's experience as president of the College, Sims hedged somewhat on this proposal, noting that "tentatively at present, I am not sure of the advisability of a junior War College course. I do not think it would be practicable at present." Some preliminary work was necessary, to wit, decommission of some vessels, and use of the realized savings to expanding the College building "which is now chockablock."

²⁸Bureau of Navigation to Sims, 6 May 1921, NWCA-RG 2.

²⁹Sims to the Bureau of Navigation, 27 September 1920, NA-RG 80, ibid. Sims was interested in 'lead time' also, but at the reporting end rather than the detachment stage. He suggested that prospective student officers be notified of their orders to Newport

The number of students in the class and the reporting date were not the only considerations involving class organization. Elements other than rank and years of service were considered by the Department and the College in forming a class. No hard and fast requirements beyond desire and availability characterized pre-war nomination to the College class. In the postwar years, selectivity increased as the Department sought to assure that the input/output ratios fulfilled the higher command demands of the Navy and that the Knox board recommendations were being followed.

Sims and his successors were keenly aware of the need to publicize the existence and contributions of the College, both within and outside the Navy. Realizing that an increase in the number of student officers would increase the College's visibility, Sims moved to include in the student body various staff officers such as medical, supply, construction, and civil engineering corps. Chaplain and dental corps officers

as early as possible since "the housing problem in Newport is very difficult." The situation as to boarding houses was similar. The circumstances were equally undesirable at the detachment stage. Frequently the student officer had not received orders by graduation time, thereby requiring him to move to a temporary location and depriving incoming officers of needed space.

would be excluded along with civilians and foreign military officers.³⁰ In short, a selectively diversified student body held distinct advantages for the Navy, the College, and the individual officer.

6

A perennial topic--relocation of the College--appeared quickly after its reactivation in 1919. The College had been established originally in Newport because of the College's emphasis on practical exercises afloat (the sea and the fleet were readily available and a physical facility was available on Coasters Harbor Island, Newport).

Throughout the years of its early existence, numerous recommendations appeared from senior naval

³⁰Sims to Secretary of Navy, 22 August 1921, NWCA-RG 2. At this time Sims listed 65 billets for officers in the single College course of which 50 would be reserved for line officers. Of the remaining 15 billets--distributed principally between Army and Marine officers, one billet would be reserved for a Coast Guard officer. The latter category regularly attended the College after its reactivation until 1925. No Coast Guard officer appeared for the balance of the interwar period after that date due primarily to a shortage of officers available for detail to the College.

At one time admission of "civilian writers" to the College program was considered. Although Admiral Sims believed that twenty-five civilian students could be accommodated, the General Board concluded that although it was "sound policy to assist as far as practicable all writers on naval subjects . . . for the large body of correspondents this assistance can best be given through the Information Section of the Office of Naval Intelligence." Navy Department, General Board, No. 447, Serial 1166, 9 March 1923, ibid.

officers to relocate the College in Washington, D.C. Indeed, the clamor reached such proportions in August, 1893, that Secretary of Navy H. A. Herbert journeyed to Newport to determine personally not only the best location for the College but also justification for its very existence. Secretary Herbert came to accept the need for the College as well as its continued operation in Newport, a decision with which his immediate successors concurred. The issue remained relatively dormant for several years. Secretary Daniels ignited the topic in 1920 when he advocated removal of the College to Washington.³¹ Daniels believed the arguments for shifting the College to Washington (closer liaison with the Army War College, the War and Navy departments as well as the Naval Academy, plus more frequent conferences to supplement joint operations between the two services) far outweighed the benefits of the Newport site.

To assist the Secretary of Navy in his deliberations on a permanent site for the College, the Chief of Naval Operations asked the opinion of his staff members who had attended the Naval War College on their

³¹Navy Department, Annual Reports-1920 (Washington, 1921), pp. 154-155. Daniels declared there were many good reasons for the move, offering as a clincher to his argument the fact that the College had "outgrown its facilities at Newport."

reaction to the proposed relocation. In general the staff members straddled the issue, saying that those "who took the course did not have a working knowledge of what went on in the administration end of the institution." The consensus report also advised that the opinion of department heads and bureau chiefs should be solicited as to "what they will need from the War College in future . . . they are in a better position to judge." The consensus noted pertinently that "since the World War the development of the course at the War College had undergone radical changes and that the requirements for a building to accommodate the activities have increased greatly. The increased ranges at which battles are fought and other lessons learned from the war have made it necessary to discard the old game board at the War College and play the game on the floor."³²

Despite this flurry of discussion, Daniels' campaign was aborted by his successor, Edwin Denby, who

³²Navy Department, Office of Chief of Naval Operations, "Staff Report regarding proposed relocation of Naval War College," 29 December 1920, NA-RG 80, Box 501.

actively opposed any attempt to relocate the College.³³ The issue reappeared periodically during the balance of the interwar period, but in the absence of strong secretariat support attempts to relocate the College failed.

7

As the student officers moved through their academic routine of readings, lectures, theses, and war games, world and national events transpired to influence the vitality and relevancy of the College curriculum. In particular, the existing and potential strength and capability of the fleets of the major powers generated substantial concern. World political leaders, responsive to the rising public clamor, sought to avoid a repetition of the recent war devastation and a burgeoning arms race. The American military posture was complicated by the existence of a naval shipbuilding program approved during the 1916 preparedness thrust and the 1917-1918 wartime demands for a Navy second to none. In addition, the accelerating advances in weaponry, armament, and aircraft inherently affected naval planning.

³³ Edwin Denby to Honorable Thomas S. Butler, Chairman, Committee on Naval Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., 10 June 1921, NA-RG 80, ibid.

A high point in this political-military ferment occurred in 1921 when the major powers, as a result of American encouragement, sent representatives to Washington to consider measures to reduce naval armaments. The original impetus for this conference had come from Senator William E. Borah, a Republican from Idaho. In time, President Harding accepted the idea of an arms limitation conference. He issued an invitation to the current major powers, nine in number, to attend the conference and to discuss means of encouraging harmonious political relations while working toward fiscal stability.

At the outset of the conference the American delegation, headed by Secretary of State Charles E. Hughes, presented a specific plan (prepared substantially by senior naval advisers)³⁴ to limit warship construction, actual and planned, and to prevent further fortifications in the Pacific. The proposal

³⁴Sims to Henry A. Wise Wood, 16 November 1921, Sims Papers, Container 28. As a renowned naval officer, Sims might well have qualified as a member of this consultant group. However, he claimed never to have entertained the thought that he would be called upon to contribute to these position papers. "In fact," he wrote bitterly, "my assignment to such duty would hardly be logical in view of the fact that I have been officially discredited by the government, through the action of the Congress in refusing to grant me the promotion in grade that was recommended by the government."

became the fulcrum of conference deliberations and agreement. Naval tonnages would be set at fixed ratios; no capital ships would be constructed for the next ten years. The conference did not agree on the number of submarines, cruisers and destroyers which each navy could possess. Every nation--in accordance with its location, wealth, and manpower--had a different idea of the value of these vessel types.

Hope for a permanent peace was real in 1921. Indeed, idealism may well have outdistanced reality. On the chance that the disarmament treaty might endure, it was agreed that the age at which a battleship or aircraft carrier might be replaced by new construction would be twenty years. It was agreed further among the five principal powers that no new construction of naval bases in the western Pacific would be permitted.

These understandings on ship construction and base development were incorporated in an accord called the Five Power Treaty. This agreement postponed international naval shipbuilding rivalry until 1936 when Japan's repudiation of its provisions sounded the death knell for arms reduction. Agreement to forego further development of naval bases in the western Pacific would hamper implementation of existing American naval policy. Also, the curriculum and the

professional attitudes under development at the College (reflected most prominently in the propositions contained in student theses on policy and strategy, and war gaming essentials) would be influenced by conference agreements. For example, during the academic year 1923-1924 the student officers undertook a comprehensive study of the BLUE (United States), RED (Great Britain) and ORANGE (Japan) navies as agreed upon at the Washington disarmament conference. Instructions to the student officers--here as throughout the period--advised the participants that in all naval problems naval strength would be assumed to conform to treaty stipulations.

Other agreements were reached at the Washington conference which would exert influence on naval policy and planning and Naval War College studies. Chief among these accords were the Four Power Treaty (by which the United States, Britain, France and Japan agreed to respect each other's possessions in the Pacific and to settle disputes arising from these possessions by joint conference) and the Nine Power Treaty (by the terms of which all nations present at the conference solemnly swore to protect the national integrity of China).

The "Open Door" policy, so ably implemented by the Navy earlier in the century, seemed once again to be in effect. For the moment, provided the agreements were honored by the signatories, the foreign commitments of the United States were in balance with the nation's ability to protect and to enforce them.

The Washington agreements would have a significant impact on the Naval War College curriculum. Studies in strategy and tactics would be predicated hereafter on the assumption that these treaties were being honored. In the College course of study many strategic and tactical problems assigned to student officers were based on ship and aircraft capabilities. As the arms limitations agreements dictated significant restrictions on the size, speed, and armament of these vessels new assumptions were necessary in war gaming. These developments required that assigned problems be updated, operational data be expanded, and training manuals be revised to reflect these changed conditions.

In addition to the agreements reached at the Washington conference, the Naval War College curriculum continued to be influenced by scientific and technological developments within the military and naval professions. Throughout the interwar period the Navy would wrestle with the advances in aviation and

submarine capabilities and their impact on the pre-eminence of the battleship in naval strategy.

Although the airplane had made remarkable progress in the years immediately prior to the First World War, that conflict provided enormous stimulation to aeronautical development. During the war years naval aviation was well represented in hostile action.

In the postwar years the glamor accompanying aviation continued.³⁵ This condition greatly aided public acceptance and helped the Navy as it sought funds to expand its aviation arm. In 1921 the Navy

³⁵This assessment of naval aviation during its early existence, including its wartime performance, has been gleaned from Wallace W. Elton, Alfred H. Driscoll, Robert N. Burchmore, and Gray B. Larkum, A Guide to Naval Aviation (New York, 1944), pp. 2-7; Stanford E. Moses Notes on Naval Aviation (Washington, 1926), pp. 1-21; Robert A. Cras, Wings of Gold: A Story of United States Naval Aviation (Philadelphia, 1965), pp. 60-82; Bernard Brodie, Sea Power in the Machine Age (Princeton, 1941), pp. 387-406, (hereafter cited as Sea Power); Archibald D. Turnball and Clifford L. Lord, History of U.S. Naval Aviation (New Haven, 1949), pp. 150-323, (hereafter cited as Naval Aviation); and Navy Department, United States Naval Aviation: 1910-1960 (Washington, 1950), pp. 29, 39-77.

In the period 1917-1918, naval aviation expanded from a strength of 48 officers, 239 enlisted men, 54 airplanes, 1 airship, 3 balloons, and 1 air station on 1 April 1917, to a strength of 6,716 officers and 30,693 men in Navy units and 282 officers, 2,180 enlisted men in Marine Corps units with 2,107 aircraft, 15 dirigibles, and 215 kite and free balloons on hand by November, 1918. Of these numbers, 18,000 officers and enlisted men, and 570 aircraft had been sent abroad.

took a major step to organize its embryonic aviation activity with the establishment of a Bureau of Aeronautics and with the appointment of Rear Admiral William A. Moffett to direct its activities. Prior to this time, naval aviation activities had been guided by a Director of Naval Aviation, located in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

Under Moffett's leadership, naval aviation moved forward steadily during the 1920's and 1930's (Moffett was killed in the crash of the Akron in April, 1933). Administrative and operational activities improved throughout the period, resulting in an increased naval air capability. Not only in general aircraft development per se (increased speeds and higher altitudes) but within such distinctly military requirements as bombsights, catapults, and armaments, the military aircraft capability greatly expanded.³⁶ In turn, these scientific and technological developments affected existing naval strategy and tactics.

³⁶Admiral Ernest J. King (who succeeded Moffett at the Bureau of Aeronautics) believed that "it would be an understatement to say merely that the Navy recognized the growing importance of air power" since the Navy, by leading in some areas and quickly adopting developments in other areas made "its aviation the standard by which all other naval aviation is judged" Admiral Ernest J. King, United States Navy at War (Washington, 1952), p. 5.

Several controversies over the nature and location of the military air arm characterized much of the interwar period.³⁷ A number of congressional hearings and investigations by special boards fanned the controversy before the turbulence subsided.³⁸

³⁷While complete as well as partial treatments of this controversy abound, for a judicious and restrained assessment of the Navy's reaction to General Mitchell's pressure for an independent air arm see Robert Earl McClendon, The Question of Autonomy for the United States Air Arm, 1907-1945, 2 vols, (Maxwell AFB, 1950). Also Vincent Davis, The Admirals Lobby (Chapel Hill, 1967), pp. 81-82, 84-92. Davis notes that proposals to unify the military services also arose in the 1920's, running counter to the Mitchellite's campaign for air autonomy. This development confused matters, according to Davis, since "unification was designed to create one service where previously there were two, the Mitchell men wanted three in place of two."

³⁸Sparked by the recent tragedy of the airship Shenandoah, the secretaries of the War and Navy Departments urged President Coolidge "to call upon a group of highly qualified citizens to study the whole problem of aircraft in national defense." This board, headed by Dwight Morrow, prepared recommendations covering development of the entire aviation industry. Of particular interest to the Navy was its recommendation of a five-year expansion program that would, through the legislation that followed, make the United States naval air arm the leader throughout the world. Hearings before the President's Aircraft Board, 4 vols., (Washington, 1925), (hereafter cited as Aircraft Board).

Navy spokesmen were strongly opposed to anything like a separate department of air for the nation, "believing the Navy and Army fliers should be controlled by their own central military or naval authority." In this view, most Army spokesmen concurred--General William Mitchell and his followers dissenting.

Many past and future graduates of the Naval War College testified before the board, including LCdr. M. A. Mitscher, Captain W. S. Pye, Cdr. J. Towers,

Naval aviation did not represent the sole threat to the battleship and its major role in naval planning. An old nemesis from the First World War--the submarine--remained in the naval family, tolerated but virtually unloved. In 1914, the submarine was much further advanced technologically than the airplane. After all, "the full development of a man-carrying vessel that could operate under its own power, ascend and submerge at will, navigate with reasonable accuracy, and perform a useful mission took the better part of twenty centuries."³⁹

Lt. F. P. Sherman, Cdr. John Rodgers, Cdr. P. N. L. Bellinger, and Captain J. K. Taussig. The latter officer testified that the College administration and student officers "have been very keenly alive to the value and potentialities of aviation," adding that "since the War College reconvened in 1919, there have been solved and maneuvered approximately 100 problems in which aircraft took an active part." Aircraft Board, Vol. 4, pp. 1671-1674.

A shorter treatment of the Aircraft Board deliberations, couched in the earlier development of naval air history, can be found in Turnbull and Lord, Naval Aviation, pp. 249-258.

³⁹Available literature on submarines is plentiful but concentrated on early development, wartime exploits rather than technical performance and, of late, nuclear developments. Pre-1914 and 1919-1939 experiences by the military are little treated. This capsulation of the role of the submarine has been derived from Navy Department, Naval History Division, The Submarine in the United States Navy, Third Edition, (Washington, 1969); Arch Whitehouse, Subs and Submariners (Garden City, 1961); Commander David D. Lewis, The Fight for the Sea (Cleveland, 1961); Vice Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet, RN., The Submarine and Sea Power (New York, 1967); Brodie, Sea Power, and Frank T. Cable,

The First World War reduced the number of skeptics on the full potential of the submarine. Postwar acceptance in the naval family, however, was slow and reluctant. Technical advance, unimpeded by disarmament restrictions, continued slowly throughout the interwar period. Submarine capability, both offensive and defensive, increased significantly: the boats became larger; armament increased; scouting, minelaying and torpedoing functions improved.⁴⁰ These advances took place despite the fire of criticism arising from the recent cruelty of unrestricted war and the ferocity of enemy submarine attacks, the continuing pattern of submarine disasters throughout the interwar period, and continued progress in anti-submarine countermeasures.⁴¹

The Birth and Development of the American Submarine
(New York, 1924), (hereafter cited as American Submarine).

⁴⁰No agreement was reached at the Washington conference regarding submarines, their number or development. While England favored abolition of the boat, the French saw it as an excellent defensive weapon for nations without a large fleet of battleships. Short-sightedly, the representatives meeting in Washington failed to see that when a weapon (in this case, the submarine) "lends itself to the protection or advancement of a nation's interests, meaningful limitation is doubtful." Lawrence H. Douglas, "The Submarine and the Washington Conference of 1921," NWC Review, XXVI (March-April, 1974), pp. 86-100.

⁴¹In this regard, slowness and reluctance refer solely to the rapidity with which options were exercised. The General Board, in 1922, stated emphatically that the submarine "was destined to play important roles in future naval warfare. The functions exercised by these types of submarines (scout and minelaying) have not been curtailed but emphasized by treaty agreements." In short, the submarine would be "indispensable to

Naval aviation and submarine development were bound to affect the existing order of naval battle in which the battleship held a major role. When the First World War began, naval power had been equated with battleship capability.⁴² Although confrontation between the principal German and British fleets was limited severely--the battles of Jutland and Dogger Bank represented distinct exceptions--naval leaders generally entered the postwar period convinced of the battleship's continued hold on the major position in the concept of a balanced fleet.⁴³

future operations." This conviction was not shared by the Congress, however, as appropriations for submarine construction over the next decade were minimal, frequently non-existent. Navy Department, General Board, No. 420-2, Serial 1137, 17 July 1922, OAB-NHC.

⁴²This synthesis of the development of the battleship, its role in the First World War, and its interwar status reflect the observations contained in Navy Department, Naval History Division, The Battleship in the United States Navy (Washington, 1970), pp. 3-21; Brodie, Sea Power, pp. 235-257, and Peter Radfield, The Battleship Era (New York, 1972). This volume, like so many others dealing with this subject, stresses British development though American experience is included as "the challenge from the New World." For a pictorial review of American battleship development see Alan Frederick Pater, United States Battleships: The History of America's Greatest Fighting Fleet (Beverly Hills, Calif., 1968).

⁴³The wartime experience had converted Admiral Sims to the potential of military and naval aviation. In the postwar years, the conviction intensified. Writing to General "Billy" Mitchell, he declared that as far as he could see "the air business is booming, and it cannot be long before the average conservatives

While College staff and student officers of an earlier period were convinced that the battleship constituted the backbone of the Navy, scientific and technological advances during and after the First World War raised doubts regarding the battleship's continued pre-eminence. The skeptics relied on the airplane and submarine to substantiate their doubts.⁴⁴

The Washington naval disarmament conference with its restrictions on capital ship construction placed the battleship in a state of arrested development. Further attacks on its value in future naval battles came from aviation enthusiasts of which the military contained no small number. Various operational tests were devised, often distortedly, to ascertain battleship vulnerability to aerial attack. The results invariably placed the battleship in an unfavorable posture--usually on the ocean floor.⁴⁵ Although

in both services realize they are up against the most dangerous weapon that will ever be developed. This is due to your energy and activities." Sims to Brigadier General William Mitchell, 18 April 1921, Sims Papers, Container 27.

⁴⁴Frank T. Cable, American Submarines, pp. 294, 311. Cable notes that "the submarine, with its unlimited potentialities of growth as a war weapon is fated to become the backbone of navies. In underseas craft lies our future naval development." Cable foresaw construction of "a submersible battleship."

⁴⁵The controversy was accelerated by the gunfire and bombing experiments on various ships held during July, 1921. The German battleship Ostfriesland experiment sparked the greatest dispute. After a two-day

developments in military aviation and submarines during the interwar years augured ill for the future of the battleship, the General Board, in 1921, declared that "the basic idea of the battleship as embodying the heavy reserves of combatant strength is sound and will endure."⁴⁶

By the summer of 1922 a standardized College organization and study routine awaited the incoming class of fifty student officers. The class included many officers who would rise to the highest ranks within the Navy in the decades ahead. Two of the student officers--Commanders Harold R. Stark and Chester W. Nimitz--would serve as Chief of Naval Operations. During these summer months, the usual staff turnover

bombing attack, during which the Army, Navy and Marine Corps planes dropped sixty-three bombs on the vessel, it sank. While this and related experiments revealed the potency of air attack, the Navy maintained that the test contained several flaws: the ship was anchored, it had no interceptor planes to attack the enemy, it offered no fire to the attacking planes, and it lacked the watertight integrity that would have prevailed with a crew aboard.

⁴⁶Navy Department, General Board, No. 420-2, Serial 1083, 15 July 1921, OAB-NHC. This belief did not obscure the Board's vision as to the impact of submarine and airplane development on the role of the battleship. When calling for new ship construction, the Board strongly advocated submarine and aircraft carrier type construction.

occurred, affecting both the professional and academic components.

The 1922-1923 academic year scarcely had begun when Admiral Sims reached his sixty-fourth birthday and the Navy requirement for mandatory retirement. Sims disdained an elaborate ceremony to cap his forty-two years of naval service. In the fading sunlight of a brisk autumnal day, Sims followed the traditional procedure of reading his orders to the assembled College staff and student body. He shook hands with each officer, then walked between two lines of enlisted personnel to his barge and departed.⁴⁷

⁴⁷Newport Daily News, October 14, 1922. The restrained atmosphere of Sims' retirement ceremony was in marked contrast to the holiday atmosphere surrounding his return to Newport approximately three years earlier.

Anne (Mrs. Sims) to Dearest Family, 13 October 1922, Sims Papers, Container 29. Mrs. Sims reported that "the ceremony was very simple and without ostentation and Will conducted himself with splendid self-control and the dignity which he knows so well how to assume when necessity directs." She was very thankful to Captain Evans and Sims' "good looking Aide Mr. Van Hook" (LCdr. C. E. Van Hook) for their "sympathetic and affectionate interest in all the events of the day." Mrs. Sims revealed that in the final ceremony Sims departed the War College grounds, via barge, for Government Landing in Newport in order to receive the complete honors due upon retirement. After the ritual, he returned "to the College in the afternoon for more work and again on Sunday morning."

Morison, Admiral Sims, pp. 529-531. Morison notes that, in his retirement years, the conviction,

Throughout his presidency Admiral Sims exhibited the same personal and professional dedication that marked his entire naval career. In connection with the College, he wanted to begin operations with definite objectives; a strong organizational structure tailored to accomplish the objectives; a student body--capable, energetic and curious, and financial support geared to eliminate programmatic uncertainty. He decried conservatism in the military profession and believed the Navy should be adaptive as well as creative. So, he viewed the advent of the airplane, torpedo, and submarine as harbingers of a future to which the Navy must adapt. He would strive to incorporate this adaptiveness into the College program. With Sims' departure, the Navy power plant lost a vital piston.

Sims' accomplishments in the College presidency constituted a major challenge to his successors. Sims had been a dynamic figure in naval circles for over forty years and he had engineered the College's reactivation in a highly successful manner. Furthermore, his

confidence and duty which were the bedrock of Sims' character continued to manifest themselves as "he strove to gain recognition for the War College, to keep the record straight on submarine warfare, to explain the significance of air power, to prevent the veterans raid on the Treasury, to improve education at Annapolis, to ensure a better system of promotion, and to keep peace on earth."

dedication to reform within the Navy had assured continuous national and naval prominence. As the Sims' presidency neared its conclusion, the Navy searched for a successor who would continue his leadership but without his abrasiveness and ability to generate controversy.

Admiral Sims was concerned particularly with the type of naval officer who would follow him in the College presidency. Writing to Secretary of Navy Denby, he expressed the belief that his successor should possess "above all other qualities, the character to command the unquestioned confidence and respect of the service; that his interest in the College should be a matter of common service knowledge, and that he should have at least two years to serve before reaching the retiring age." Sims believed that "it would be a very severe blow to the confidence of the service in the College if the position of President should ever come to be considered merely as a 'billet' in which an admiral could pleasantly round out the tag end of his career."⁴⁸

Several available candidates appeared to meet the criteria Sims hoped for in his successor. One in

⁴⁸Sims to Secretary of Navy, 21 February 1922, Sims Papers, Container 54.

particular, Admiral C. S. Williams, was well known to Sims, having been a student and staff member at the College. As the end of his presidency neared, Sims urged Williams to consider requesting the College presidency in his next duty tour as "there is hardly any officer in the Navy who is available who has had as much experience with the College as you have had."⁴⁹ Williams replied that while he preferred "to join the General Board," the Chief of Naval Operations also had urged him to consider the College presidency. He added, however, that he was giving the assignment increased attention as his chances of making a cruise as an admiral were not particularly bright at this time.⁵⁰

Upon Williams' selection for the presidency, Sims voiced his approval of the nomination, offering to assist Williams in any way that would make his assumption of the presidency most pleasant. He urged Williams "to get a bit of leave before you tackle the job," adding that the College administrative routine would pretty much handle itself.⁵¹

⁴⁹Sims to Admiral C. S. Williams, 10 March 1922, Sims Papers, Container 91.

⁵⁰C. S. Williams to Sims, 15 March 1922, ibid.

⁵¹Sims to Admiral C. S. Williams, 22 September 1922, ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE WILLIAMS INTERLUDE: 1922-1925

Upon his arrival from Washington, where he had been serving as Chief of the War Plans Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations,¹ the major tasks facing Admiral Williams were to solidify the gains recorded by the College during the Sims administration; to strengthen the evolving institutional structure, and to move forward in those programs where positive

¹Admiral C. S. Williams was born in Springfield, Ohio, 7 October 1863, graduating from the local high school in 1880. He entered the Naval Academy, graduating therefrom in 1884, receiving his commission as ensign two years later. His service ashore during forty-seven years of active service included three tours of duty at the Naval Academy; three years as assistant with the General Board; one year as a member of the Board of Inspection and Survey; one year in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations, and three years as student and staff member at the Naval War College prior to assuming his presidency. During the latter duty he would serve on the General Board. Admiral Williams' service afloat followed the traditional pattern of increased duties and widening responsibilities--commensurate with advancing rank--through a variety of ship types and major fleet commands, concluding as Commander-in-Chief, Asiatic Fleet (1925-1927), from which position he retired from active service. Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22.

Departmental support could be expected. Fortuitously, the prolonged clamor for the establishment of a junior course crystallized during the Williams' administration. The establishment of this course as a necessary stage in the education of general line officer education had been recommended earlier by the Knox-King-Pye board. The time was opportune and the Department support was present. In directing the addition of this course to the College program, Williams made a distinct contribution to the College's development, a fact attested by the continuous existence of the course (despite changes in title).

The need for a junior course had been recognized for several years prior to its establishment. The actual decision to set up the course awaited an evaluation of the recently extended "long" or "senior" course. Experience with the latter would indicate what deficiencies, if any, the student officers brought to their studies and would spotlight appropriate remedial action (conceivably in the form of a "preparatory" or "junior" course).

In his preparations for reactivation of the College, Sims had disclosed his belief that such a

course was overdue.² All too frequently in the past, Sims noted, officers had appeared for the senior course without benefit of the correspondence course in strategy and tactics which was to have familiarized them with the College's dictum and methodology. As a result, the student officer could not maximize the advantages of the senior course. Therefore, Sims recommended formation of a short course, approximately four months in length, designed "to direct the minds and interests of young Lieutenants and Lieutenant Commanders to the numerous important elements of their profession which are unavoidably omitted from their previous training; to prepare young officers for the command of smaller fleet units, and to train them in staff duties."

In Sims' view, participation in such a course would enable the junior officer to understand more clearly the duties and responsibilities of his seniors, thereby making him more "sympathetic and helpful" in carrying out his orders. Furthermore, the healthier attitude arising from completion of the junior course would reduce the "growling" characteristics of many junior officers. Sims then detailed the content of such a course while cautioning that (through emphasis

²Sims to Secretary of Navy, 15 January 1919, NA-RG 24, ibid.

on practicality) positive attempts must be made to avoid the usual boredom associated with "school drudgery."

Sims' views on the need for a junior or preparatory course appeared almost simultaneous with the report of the Knox-King-Pye board. In its findings, the board added its voice to the pressure for such a course. The board recommended the establishment at the Naval War College of a one-year course designed for "officers between their tenth and twentieth year of commissioned service (preferably while in the grade of lieutenant commander) in readiness for the third phase of usefulness--commanding officer." Although the board recognized the desirability of designating lieutenant commanders for the proposed "junior" course, it admitted the probability that in the near future all officers in this rank would be between their fourteenth and twenty-first year of commissioned service. Therefore, many senior lieutenants would have completed ten years of commissioned service and would have qualified, in part, for assignment to the "junior" course. The board then added that senior lieutenants, provided they had completed two sea cruises, should be eligible

for the course.³ The exigencies of the service, however, would determine eventually assignments to the course.

The concern for a junior course had increased in December, 1922, when Assistant Secretary of Navy Theodore Roosevelt called a conference to consider the entire "course of instruction at the Naval War College."⁴ One agenda item cited "the creation of a new course for younger officers on shore somewhat along the lines of the Army staff colleges." Another related item sought to identify "the place where the new staff college course should be held on land." From these deliberations emanated the decision to add a junior or preparatory course to the Naval War College program.

Admiral Williams attended this conference and, upon its conclusion, directed a College staff committee to study the procedures necessary to establish the

³Navy Department, Report and Recommendations, pp. 1267-68, 1278.

⁴Assistant Secretary of Navy to the Chief of Naval Operations, 14 December 1922, NA-RG 80, Box 501. The principal participants meeting at this time with Roosevelt included the Chief of Naval Operations, Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Fleet, Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, the Major General Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, and Admiral Williams, as president of the Naval War College.

proposed course.⁵ In its report, the College study group followed most of the specifics Sims had suggested earlier.⁶

The battle was won in March, 1923, with the issuance of a General Order establishing a "junior class" at the Naval War College.⁷ The course objectives, eligibility requirements, and suggested content disclosed at this time followed closely the earlier suggestions of Admiral Sims and the recommendations of the College staff study. A noteworthy requirement for appointment to the course was an undefined "special aptitude." The Department hoped to assign twenty-five to thirty officers to the initial class convening in the summer of 1924. A maximum enrollment of sixty student officers was envisioned. However, eventual

⁵The College study group consisted of Captains D. W. Blamer, Chief of Staff; R. R. Belknap, head of the Strategy department, and Harris Laning, head of the Tactics department.

⁶Naval War College, Memo for the President, 9 January 1923, NWCA-RG 2. The study group recommended that, in addition to the work in strategy, tactics, command, and international law, a Department of History be established. This department would offer "a reading course in naval history, an analytical study and discussion of naval battles of the World War and the campaigns and battles of the Russo-Japanese war, Napoleonic wars, and the more important campaigns of the past, especially in the naval history of the United States." This recommendation was not implemented though the suggested topics continued to be studied under the aegis of existing departments.

⁷Navy Department, General Order No. 98, 6 March 1923.

expansion would depend upon available personnel as well as the physical facilities at the College. With the receipt of Department approval, the College staff moved quickly to devise a course content to achieve the stated objectives.

2

As the College operation entered 1924, its command, strategy and tactics studies had assumed a well-defined pattern. There were lectures to attend, chart and maneuver problems to solve, publications to read, and research to complete. The lectures and readings (as well as regular consultations with staff specialists) provided the reservoir of knowledge necessary for chart and maneuver problems and thesis research.

From the outset the lecture program had been an integral part of the College program. Student officers were required to attend lectures presented by staff specialists as well as outside civilian and military specialists. In the prewar period these presentations had focused on military themes. The reactivation of the College brought back the visiting civilian lecturer to the program.⁸ The recent war had underscored the

⁸At this time, the lectures presented on academic topics or close derivatives thereof rarely strayed

need to broaden the lecture presentations to include economics, psychology, political science, and other subjects as complements to the continuing emphasis on international law.

In essence, the lecture series consisted of two components: professional and academic. The professional lectures, covering a wide spectrum of subjects, were presented by visiting military and naval specialists as well as College staff members. The academic lectures, on the other hand, were presented primarily by faculty members from nearby universities and by civilian personnel from various government departments and agencies whose specialties often involved a blending of civil and military concepts.

The professional lectures offered through May, 1924, continued to feature naval and military specialists frequently speaking on military and naval experiences or aspects of the First World War.⁹ In the early

beyond the level and content of a college freshman year survey course. This approach is understandable because of the underdeveloped content of some academic disciplines at the time. Then, too, the study of social sciences perhaps represented relatively uncharted waters for the technically oriented "military managers" of the period.

⁹Naval War College, NWCA, Record Group 14: Visiting Lectures, 1884-1950, (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG 14). This source identifies the lecturer, topic, and date of presentation. In many instances, copies of the lectures have been retained. However, some speakers spoke extemporaneously.

1920's more than three-quarters of the total lecture series contained direct military themes. With the passage of time the professional lecture series increased in diversity, downgrading the historical emphasis and increasingly stressing trend analysis and projection.¹⁰

The academic lectures were of two principal types: those given annually in political science (as supplements to studies in international law) and those offered periodically in allied social sciences or special contemporary topics. Professor James Q. Dealey's policy lectures are illustrative of the

¹⁰To foster this synthesis the College administration increasingly called upon the Navy Department and its bureau chiefs to provide specialists from their staffs who would distill the latest information within a given specialty--often long before publication. National Archives holdings from the Office of the Secretary of Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the various bureau chiefs contain many (and regular) inquiries from the College administration requesting speakers, suggesting subjects for presentation, and citing available speaking dates. See National Archives, Washington, D.C., Record Groups 24, 38 and 80.

Captain T. C. Hart, "Submarines," 20 December 1920, NWCA-RG 14. Hart's presentation represents an early illustration of the integration of technological development and operational utilization. He saw an increasingly important role for the submarine as its offensive capability increased. Hart believed that submarine officers might well be correct in their contention that if submarine research and development were encouraged in conjunction with the air service and fast light surface craft, "The Fleet action will never occur."

former group.¹¹ During the first term of the academic year Dealey delivered a series of introductory lectures on United States foreign policy as applied to major geographical areas of the world: Europe, Central and South America, and the Far East. These highly standardized presentations, generally historical in nature, varied little over the years. He continually emphasized the theme of the rising 'yellow peril' in the Pacific and the need for the United States to take strong defensive measures in the Pacific; to refuse to back down in the face of Japanese threats, and to seek actively other allies to thwart Japanese imperialistic designs.¹²

¹¹Dr. James Q. Dealey lectured regularly at the College during the period 1916-1928. At this time he held a professorship in the Department of Political Science, Brown University, Providence, R.I.

¹²James Q. Dealey, "Our Relations with the Far East," 12 January 1921, NWCA-RG 14. This lecture, presented annually, represents Dealey's frame of reference throughout the period. Its impact on student officer thinking is reflected in the persistency with which the theme appears in student officer theses.

While Dealey approved of American idealism and hope that this country would assume the leadership role the world offered (thereby heading off the next world war, "in which we would be a principal rather than an assistant"), Dealey urged the western world "to federate in some fashion and cease warring among themselves or some day they will be subject to a united East." The United States should join hands with Great Britain in promoting and enforcing the "Open Door" policy. Also, the United States should retain the Philippines,

At the beginning of the 1920 decade, an interesting variant existed in the lecture program. This diversity was represented in Professor L. T. Damon's presentation on "How to Study and How to Write." This effort (much akin to contemporary college orientation and remedial work) was a basic requirement. The student officers constituted a fairly homogeneous group, drawn from similar social background, subjected to uniform professional education and work experience, and conceivably deficient in the powers of expression beyond that of a direct order.¹³ Little time existed in

should strengthen its policy toward China, and should align more actively with Great Britain.

If these conditions did not materialize, Dealey foresaw Japanese domination in the East, followed by "the much talked of 'yellow peril' under Japanese leadership." If Anglo-American cooperation was not forthcoming, then one-third of the human race would fall under Japanese domination, marking "the beginning of the end of white supremacy."

¹³Rear Admiral C. P. Plunkett, Graduation Address, June, 1920, NA-RG 24, Box 77. At the 1920 graduation ceremonies, Plunkett, speaking to the graduates in the absence of Admiral Sims, noted that student officers at England's Royal Naval College attended a class in improved use of the English language. However, he added that the closest the Naval War College came to teaching English was the precision demanded in the "estimate of the situation" wherein ambiguity and misinterpretation were barred.

the normal naval workday to improve literary skills, to contemplate or to reflect. Consequently, when the student officer reached Newport he had long been removed from the books, had forgotten earlier study habits, and had acquired serious deficiencies in the power of expression. With praiseworthy foresight, the College administration designated Professor Damon to search out these deficiencies in the student officers and to work with them to improve their power to study, to concentrate, and to write with clarity and understanding. After a few years Professor Damon's name disappears from the lecture schedule. No indication is available concerning the success or failure of his efforts--though the problem apparently continued.¹⁴

Command studies of the 1920-1925 period emphasized the development of military character and the ability to exert leadership capability in a variety of problem areas.¹⁵ The student officer synthesized

¹⁴Naval War College, Department of Administration, Notes on Agenda for Meeting with Bureau of Naval Personnel, 4 March 1949, NWCA-RG 2. This report states that "at the present time the War College is being handicapped by certain shortcomings in the prior education of some of the officers sent here under instruction. The most notable weaknesses are in grammar, spelling, speaking, clarity of expression both oral and written, rapid reading, communication, and training in logic."

¹⁵The Command department was eliminated in Admiral William V. Pratt's reorganization plan of 1926.

comprehension of this command responsibility in the preparation of his thesis for the department. In procedures similar to the preparation of his strategy and tactics theses, he read extensively, attended lectures, and worked many detailed chart and board problems.

The Command department thesis required the student officer to consider not only the development of the command function but also the manner in which he would develop (within his own command) the concepts of military character, disciplines, morale, loyalty, subordinate initiative, and their relationship to the principles of unity of command and unity of action.¹⁶ These concepts were to be considered as they inhered in the major aspects of command: its nature, organization, and administration in American, British, Japanese and French military high commands. The concluding part of the thesis required the student officer to analyze the Dardanelles campaign of the First World War with particular emphasis on administrative considerations.

¹⁶Naval War College, Command Department, "Student Handout--Thesis and Reading Course," October, 1922, NWCA, Record Group 4: Publication Office Curriculum Files, 1912-1967; (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG 4).

A review of the Command theses of this period reveals the emergence of a strikingly similar philosophy on the part of the student officers. The thesis of LtC. Walter Krueger, USA, satisfactorily reflects the thinking of most of his classmates of the inter-war period.¹⁷ While admitting the vital importance of the command function, Krueger confessed it was most difficult to discuss it conceptually. He saw the command function as including controlling and directing, and as necessarily responsive to the personal element. Krueger believed commanders were born not made and required strong inputs of boldness and superior mentality. Interestingly, he concluded his presentation with a call for establishment of a Joint Chiefs of Staff. This activity would aid the planning function thereby strengthening the command function.

Strategic studies during the 1920-1925 period tended to be conceived narrowly. This emphasis arose

¹⁷ LtC. Walter Krueger, USA, Class of 1926
Thesis: "Command," 12 September 1925, NWCA, Record
12: Student theses, 1912-1945, (hereafter cites as
NWCA-RG 12).

Student officer theses, prepared during the inter-war period, were declassified in 1973-1974. The College collection of student theses for this period 1912-1945 is incomplete. In some instances, only a single thesis exists for a given class and academic year.

because the relationship of national policy and strategy to naval policy and strategy had not been thoroughly considered at the higher governmental levels.

Instead of developing a sound military establishment, responsive to national policy commitments, the principal structural question throughout most of American military history has concerned the proper form of the military establishment in our democratic society. Continuing to the present day, this debate has concentrated on the proper influence to allot to citizen soldiers and to military professionals in national policy formulation and strategic decision-making.¹⁸

Early American military strategy sought as its objective simple military victory. The Civil War experience shifted our military objective to the complete overthrow of the enemy--unconditional surrender. To accomplish this objective, earlier American military

¹⁸The inter-relationship between national policy and military policy has attracted increased attention from a variety of analysts. In this regard, the writings of Samuel P. Huntington, Bernard Brodie, Thomas C. Schelling, Alfred Vagts, J. F. C. Fuller, and B. H. Liddell Hart, among others, stand out. These analysts have considered the nature and function of the military and naval establishments in a variety of political, economic, social, and military climates.

strategy of attrition, exhaustion or erosion of the enemy's strength moved to a strategy of annihilation. This transference has been facilitated greatly by expanding American economic prowess. With increasing warmaking capabilities now available, American military strategists were able to offer a strategy of annihilation as their contribution to total victory.¹⁹

Reflecting this contraction in general strategic conception, studies in this area at the Naval War College became increasingly narrow during the interwar period. This contraction was not necessarily at variance with the College's basic curricular thrust toward tactical considerations. The assigned strategy studies of 1924-1925, for example, were more regularly isolated portions of a larger naval plan, stressing such considerations as defense of a base, conduct of a convoy through disputed waters, search procedures preliminary to an attack on enemy convoys, and a joint Army Navy expedition against the Philippines.²⁰

Throughout most of the 1920-1925 period the Department of Strategy suggested three general thesis

¹⁹Russell F. Weigley, The American Way of War (New York, 1973). In this volume, Professor Weigley traces the development of American military strategy since the Revolutionary War.

²⁰Naval War College, Outline History, p. 159.

topics, one of which the student officer chose for his research.²¹ In addition, the department provided three conceptual frameworks which had been followed by previous classes but not necessarily constraining the present class.²²

²¹Naval War College, "Student Handout--Thesis on Policy," 30 June 1923, NWCA-RG 4. The suggested topics included: (1) Policy and its relation to War or Policy and its relation to War and with further reference to United States policies in the Pacific; (2) Policy and its relation to Strategy, Logistics and Preparation as exemplified by a study of United States policy in Europe and the Far East; and (3) such policy and relationships as revealed by a study of the United States policy in the western hemisphere.

In regard to the options available, most student officers selected the topics dealing with the Pacific and the Far East.

²²Ibid. The conceptual framework consisted of a step-by-step procedure involving a general discussion of the nature of policy, a specific discussion of some of the leading principles of policy, and, finally, the relationship of policy and war. In effect, this outline required the student officer to fill in pertinent information from his lectures and readings. In its structure the suggested outline for the strategy thesis strongly resembled the College methodology in reaching "sound military decisions." Not only were provisions made for the definition of principles, the ends of policy (internal and external) and their nature (unlimited and complex), but student thought was directed to considerations of specific principles underlying formulation of United States policy (self-preservation, national honor, political interests, economic and commercial interests, and the personality of its leaders).

The balance of the suggested outline contained substantial specificity on questions regarding American foreign policy throughout the principal geographical areas of the world. Finally, irrespective of the topic and geographical area selected, the student officer received further suggestions concerning possible solutions. For example, in policy matters regarding

The suggested outline for strategy theses, generally constant for several years, led Captain W. T. Cluverius to conclude in 1921 that United States policy in relation to war should be based on "a definite comprehensive system of national conduct best suited to the internal and external interest of the state." Not only should the policy be administered "unswervingly," but "it must be in keeping not only with the principles upon which the Republic is founded but with the ideals to which it aspires; that is, its destiny." Captain Cluverius believed that "the concerted powers (not otherwise identified) can regulate the commerce of the Pacific so that East and West can share in its limitless expansion."²³

Other strategy theses of the early 1920's underscore the student officers' suspicion of Japanese intentions, conviction that American military and naval

the Far East, student officers selecting that area of concentration encountered three suggested courses of action for American policy makers: (1) abandonment of policy of equal commercial opportunity; (2) maintenance of sufficient armed force to cause respect and to enforce demands, and (3) settlement (by international limitation of armament). Most student theses of the period expressed hope for international settlement while espousing maintenance of sufficient armed forces as a more realistic policy.

²³Captain W. T. Cluverius, Class of 1922 Thesis: "Policy" In its relation to War with special reference to United States Policy in the Pacific, August, 1921, NWCA-RG 12.

might must be sustained, and dismay at increasing public apathy.²⁴ Commander J. T. Bowers doubted that Japan would keep its word on anything; Captain T. C. Hart noted that United States policies in the Far East are "rather cloudy and practical application is both middle-of-the-road and transitory;" while Commander C. W. Nimitz--having examined all previous conferences having a bearing on the formulation of United States policy--mused that "it remains to be seen how far each country will go in keeping its pledges." To guard against any deterioration in the present American position, Nimitz urged that "naval strength must be kept up to the standard allowed if we are to go to the support of our pledges." With new political ideologies arising throughout the world, Nimitz concluded that the United States' duty now "lies in the awakening of public opinion to the necessity of backing with force those of our traditional policies which are still in effect."

Commanders Harold R. Stark and A. C. Read were other members of the class of 1923 who agreed that the United States should maintain a strong military posture.

²⁴These themes permeate similarly titled theses prepared by three members of the Class of 1923: Commander J. T. Bowers, Captain T. C. Hart and Commander C. W. Nimitz, September, 1922, ibid.

Read proposed that the United States should be "concerned with keeping strength at fully allowed strength, maintaining maximum efficiency in material and personnel, and a thorough study and development of the best methods of utilizing these forces." Stark, on the other hand, noted that the Washington naval disarmament conference provided "no permanent guarantee against war from those quarters concerned with Open Door." He agreed with former Assistant Secretary of Navy Roosevelt (not otherwise identified) that Americans should "fear God and do your own thing."²⁵

It remained for Captain R. E. Bakenhus to sound the most idealistic theme concerning American policies in the Pacific.²⁶ Bakenhus believed "there is one hope--a dream only--to avoid war, and that is that at some time the moral sense of the populations of the

²⁵Commander Harold R. Stark and Commander A. C. Read, ibid. Commander Stark later became Chief of Naval Operations, 1939-1942. Commander Read was the first naval aviator detailed to the Naval War College. He had achieved public recognition in May, 1919, when he commanded a naval flying boat in the first crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by air. While at the College, Read was detailed "to supply the expert technical knowledge required in the preparation of problems and as umpire of air operations in tactical games." Rear Admiral William Moffett endorsement, dated 23 January 1923, to letter of President, Naval War College, to Bureau of Navigation, 9 January 1923, NA-RG 24, Box 77.

²⁶Captain R. E. Bakenhus, Class of 1924 Thesis; "Policy," 4 September 1923, ibid.

world may be developed to the point where their ideals are all of the highest and all in harmony, when all the nations and all the races understand one another and all have contempt for those that fight, and when differences may be settled by a central tribunal which all respect." Granting that our meagre past contact with the Orient impeded our effort to understand that mind, Bakenhus offered no solution to the problem other than the immediate need for hard work.

Perhaps the best distillation of the convictions held by the student officers of the 1920 decade is contained in the thesis submitted by Commander J. S. McCain.²⁷ He believed that it was only through the combined efforts of English and American leaders that Japan's aggressive designs were stopped in 1921. McCain did not doubt for a moment that "she (Japan) will try again when the time is ripe . . . this will make trouble for us . . . Japan covets the Pacific."

The Class of 1925 was the first group required to include logistical considerations in its strategy thesis. Although the logistical function is as old as war itself, this effort marked the first formal

²⁷ Commander J. S. McCain, Class of 1929 Thesis; "The Foreign Policies of the United States," 27 April 1929, ibid.

recognition of this function in the College study program.²⁸ Earlier reference to logistics had occurred primarily in the professional lecture series. This class thesis, however, required student officers to apply logistical principles to one of the following situations: (1) British and German naval strategy in the Great War; (2) Japanese naval strategy in the war with Russia; (3) Nelson's campaign during the years preceding Trafalgar, or (4) the Gallipoli campaign in the Great War. This expansion in the number of suggested topics represented an advance over the usually assigned problem of working out a supply of fuel for a fleet engaged in an overseas operation. While logistics was often branded as "tedious and rather irksome," Admiral Williams believed that this experience gave the student officer a wholesome appreciation of the importance of the subject.²⁹

By and large the principal emphasis during the 1920's (as reflected particularly in chart and board problems and student theses) was centered on tactical

²⁸A course in logistics would be added to the College program in 1926 as a result of the organizational changes instituted by Admiral William V. Pratt.

²⁹Rear Admiral C. S. Williams, "The Work of the Naval War College," 1 May 1924, NWCA-RG 16. These observations are contained in a paper read by Rear Admiral Williams at the Army War College, Washington, D.C.

studies. This emphasis was directed "largely to the theoretical solution of practical problems, followed by test of selected solutions on the maneuver board." In these exercises "practical situations are examined and conclusions reached as to the relative advantage of certain positions and formations as measured by the resulting superiority of effective gun and torpedo fire." In short, the student officer would master "the one embodying principle of superiority of force at the point of contact so as to disorganize and destroy the entire enemy force or at least to prevent the enemy's accomplishing the same object against one's own force."³⁰

The pervasiveness of tactical considerations even permeated the lecture program where, in 1923, one lecturer recommended that the College develop "definite standards of tactical readiness" for the Navy's basic war plans. In line with this recommendation the College would be called upon to formulate "standards of tactical excellence comparable with present gunnery

³⁰Naval War College, Department of Tactics, Tactical Principles and Their Application, May, 1922, NWCA-RG 4, pp. 1-2, 17.

standards."³¹ Copies of these remarks were forwarded by the Navy Department to all major fleet commands for comment. While initial reaction was favorable, other emerging priorities prevented development of the proposal.³²

Throughout the 1920 decade, the tactical experience at Jutland received saturation emphasis in the College's tactical studies. Other major historical naval battles (Trafalgar and Toulon, in particular) were also examined, but by and large the professional infatuation with Jutland predominated.

To fulfill the tactics thesis requirement for the Class of 1920, Captain J. R. P. Pringle submitted a thesis containing the thematic characteristics of the period: a definition of tactical terms followed by a re-examination of tactical movements in the battles of Trafalgar, Toulon (1744), and the Nile (1798).³³

³¹Commander Russell Wilson, "Tactical Readiness of our Fleet for War," 19 January 1923, NA-RG 80, Box 32.

³²Commander-in-Chief, Battle Fleet, to Chief of Naval Operations, 26 May 1923, ibid. Admiral Eberle was one of several senior line officers who viewed the proposal favorably and who envisioned a significant role for the Naval War College if development of tactical standards was undertaken.

³³Captain J. R. P. Pringle, Class of 1920 Thesis: "Tactics," 15 January 1920, NWCA-RG 12.

A slight variant appears in the 1920 tactics thesis of Captain L. H. Chandler. At the outset Chandler sought to identify the factors contributing to improved tactical knowledge. In this regard he listed three essential elements: original thought and study, experience at sea (combined with study and analysis of the results of such experience), and finally study at the Naval War College tactical board. He noted that "such work is of course more or less artificial, but with care in drawing false deductions as a result of such artificiality, many important lessons have been drawn from the use of the board." The practical result of this tactical study and experience, Chandler notes, could be found in the "doctrines and methods laid down in fleet standing orders, in the battle signal book, and in the official publication on the service of information and security" ³⁴

No significant change in analytical procedure or definitive results is apparent from an examination of tactics theses available for the period ending May, 1925. Captain Harris Laning (who upon completion of the course in 1922 would be named head of the Tactics department) did not deviate from well-traveled lanes

³⁴ Captain L. H. Chandler, ibid.

in submitting his tactics thesis. There was the usual exposition of general tactical principles, basic tactical dispositions, and their application in battle. Laning, too, included the usual assessment of tactical action at Jutland.³⁵

While Commander J. W. Wilcox, Jr., followed much the same pattern in preparing his tactics thesis in 1924 (definitions, types of tactics, tactical elements, principles of war, etc.), he confessed that "in undertaking to lay down the tactical dispositions and operations of a fleet in battle, I make no effort at originality of any sort as I find that, for my own information, I can do no better than write down for my own edification such parts of the pamphlet Tactics, The Naval Battle as gotten out by Department of Tactics of the Naval War College, as will serve me at some future time."³⁶

Wilcox observed that the presence of aircraft in the military and naval arsenals created major tactical problems. He noted that "when one considers the weapons which airplanes can carry (torpedoes, bombs, poison

³⁵Captain Harris Laning, Class of 1922 Thesis: "Tactics," 22 April 1922, ibid.

³⁶Commander J. W. Wilcox, Jr., Class of 1924 Thesis: "Tactics," 1 May 1924, ibid. Wilcox later served as Chief of Staff at the College, 1937-1939. He was lost at sea early in the Second World War.

gas, etc.), it can readily be appreciated that with further developement (sic) of the airplane, a fleet engagement of the future, in which large numbers of planes may be employed, the effect on the battle fleet will be a powerful one and one that requires much study and foresight to counteract."

Another outstanding member of the 1924 class, Captain J. M. Reeves, stressed the need to coordinate strategy and tactics and not to consider them in isolation. He expended much space on the need to clarify basic definitions in order to improve understanding and communications. Reeves reviewed many basic tactical situations using these events to examine tactical principles. The Battle of Jutland came in for its usual emphasis.³⁷

For the class of 1925, Commander P. N. L. Bellinger included aviation considerations in his tactics thesis. Bellinger, a pioneer in naval aviation, concentrated on heavier-than-air craft, noting that the availability of aircraft in a battle would have major

³⁷Captain J. M. Reeves, *ibid.* Although not as widely known as some of his contemporaries, Reeves was prominent in the early development of naval aviation. For a brief, laudatory treatment of Reeves' career, see Rear Admiral John D. Hayes, "Admiral Joseph Mason Reeves," *NWC Review*, XXIII (November, 1970), pp. 48-57, and XXIV (January, 1972), pp. 50-64.

significance. He stressed particularly the personal element (the importance of the individual aviator) in determining the outcome of the battle. Bellinger also saw the wise commander as giving due regard to aviation in his strategic and tactical planning.³⁸

Although the nature of the tactics theses became standardized throughout the interwar period, the subject matter would become increasingly complex. Scientific and technological advances increased ship and aircraft capabilities, thereby rendering more complex the range of tactical options. To offset this built-in obsolescence, the tactics course was designed "to start each class as nearly as practicable at the point where the preceding class left off and work onward from that point so that on leaving the College a student will be up to the development of the day, and taking his ideas to sea with him, will be in a position to keep the fleet as nearly perfect as it is possible for that particular time." Student officers were advised further that in working out tactical problems "the weapons of modern navies are guns, torpedoes, bombs, and mines (emphasis NWC), all of which are

³⁸ Commander P. N. L. Bellinger, Class of 1925 Thesis: "Tactics," 9 May 1925, NWCA-RG 12.

employed to destroy enemy fighting craft in order that one's own craft may remain in control of the area."³⁹

4

In September, 1925, Admiral Williams left the College presidency for his next command. During his three-year administration he had worked cautiously but positively to assure the continued growth of the College. Neither as controversial nor as flamboyant as his predecessor, Admiral Williams nonetheless worked effectively within naval circles to improve the quality and reality of the College program. Though not the originator of the idea of a Junior class, the pressure for establishment of this additional phase in the College studies was brought to a successful conclusion during his tenure. Williams' administration was a vital link between the Sims years and the upcoming Pratt presidency. Every institution requires intervals to prepare to move forward. In this regard the Williams presidency was a success.

³⁹Naval War College, Department of Tactics, On Tactics, Section I: The Naval Battle; June, 1923, pp. 1-2, NWCA-RG 4.

CHAPTER V

THE MIDDLE PERIOD, 1925-1930

PART 1. THE PRATT YEARS, 1925-1927

In 1925 instability still characterized much of the world political scene. While the English and French governments were returning to normal operations, internal discord disrupted Germany, Italy, and eastern Europe. Efforts to achieve a workable disarmament agreement continued. Because the provisions of the Washington treaty affected only capital ships, repeated attempts were made in this period to extend its provisions to other types of warships and auxiliary vessels. In furtherance of this goal, a disarmament conference met in Geneva in 1927, but failed to reach any additional accord.

Two years earlier steps had been taken to tranquilize the political climate through the Locarno treaties of 1925 by which Germany, France and Britain pledged to maintain peace with one another. This effort was followed within a few years by a more comprehensive attempt to exorcise the threat of war: the

treaty of Paris (better known by the names of its two leading sponsors, Frank B. Kellogg, United States Secretary of State, and Aristide Briand, French Foreign Minister). Neither the American nor the French government was particularly enthusiastic about this pact. By the terms of the agreement, signed in 1928, virtually all nations of the world pledged to outlaw war as an instrument of national policy. The pact lacked enforcement provisions and, in not ruling out defensive wars, assured its eventual demise.

Throughout the 1920's the American government sought to ameliorate additional vexing problems affecting international relations. Chief among these difficulties was the reparations problem. Through the Dawes commission a new scale of reparations payments was agreed upon which more nearly approached Germany's capacity to repay. In 1928 the reparations payments were further modified by another American commission, headed by Owen D. Young.

The reparations question related directly to the problem of war debts. As America sought to receive repayment for underwriting a considerable amount of the war expenses, her former friends and allies became increasingly reluctant to repay. Charges and counter-charges clouded the basic issue. The final result was

little repayment and increased distrust. America was then further disposed to move toward isolation and neutrality.

While Americans kept their eyes on foreign affairs, their politicians and businessmen vied with one another in asserting that the United States had found the key to perpetual prosperity. Despite the optimism of the nation's leaders, evidence of an approaching depression was clearly apparent. There were increasing signs that the nation's ability to produce was outrunning its ability to consume.

A major economic theory during the 1920's maintained that if business was assisted in making steady profits and expanding production, there would be full employment and prosperity would "trickle-down" to all sections of the population. Unfortunately, in the cauldron of reality, the theory did not operate. Large segments of the population did not experience prosperous times. The economy virtually collapsed in the years immediately following 1929.

Throughout most of the 1920 decade, Americans continued to search for "normalcy." While problems of prohibition, immigration, and gangsterism joined those of farm relief, shipping and transportation subsidies, and tariff problems, the average American felt far removed from the actual economic events that would

affect him drastically at the decade's end. Truly, a superficial "normalcy" was distorting the perspective of an unsuspecting society.

By 1925 the Navy had assumed the posture it would maintain for most of the remaining interwar period. While the Department struggled to develop naval strength up to the limits permitted by the Washington disarmament conference, it also sought to incorporate the rapid scientific and technological changes taking place, particularly in aeronautics and ordnance.

Until the rapid expansion in naval strength experienced in the mid-1930's (occasioned by the collapse of disarmament agreements), the Navy had continual difficulty in obtaining sufficient funds to undertake authorized ship construction. This deficiency was compounded by the major strides being recorded in aviation capability, affecting as it did the design of the aircraft carrier, the capability of the various plane types, and the entire order of battle.

While the Department pondered these matters, there was the additional issue concerning organization of the military and naval air arms. The Navy Department pushed for its own air wing as against an Army-directed or independent air force. While the controversy raged, the Navy followed closely the British experience with aircraft carriers, and successfully

commissioned the USS Lexington and the USS Saratoga in 1927. The potentialities of lighter-than-air craft and submarines also continued to receive strong Navy support.

Annual fleet exercises in this period, incorporating advances in strategic and tactical doctrine, sought to maintain the Navy in a satisfactory state of preparedness. Valuable experiences from these exercises made their way to the Naval War College war game board and resulted in improved strategic and tactical doctrine.

Education and training programs also continued throughout the decade despite shortages of personnel and operating funds. When combined with political and economic difficulties, the continuity of these programs was seriously threatened.

2

In September, 1925, Rear Admiral William V. Pratt arrived in relief of Rear Admiral Williams. At this time Pratt was fifty-six years of age and was a highly regarded naval officer.¹ In many ways Pratt's

¹Rear Admiral William V. Pratt, a native of Belfast, Maine, had entered the Naval Academy in September, 1885, at the age of sixteen, completing the required studies in 1889. The next two years were spent at sea, as required, before he received his commission as ensign in 1891. The usual progression of sea and shore duty followed--one of the latter

modus operandi was reminiscent of Sims. Both men were innovative, possessed diverse interests, and worked tirelessly to achieve personal and professional goals. While not associated with any 'reform' group within the Navy, Pratt was always receptive to new ideas. He viewed his tenure as College president as a time to revitalize the institution and to assure its responsiveness to the current dynamic changes affecting the military and naval professions. Within a year of his arrival in Newport, Pratt had restructured the College organization and program.

Admiral Pratt spent his initial year at the College assessing the total College operation. With the

including attendance at the Naval War College, 1911-1913.

During World War I, Admiral Pratt served in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. At the war's end, he became a member of President Wilson's party bound for Europe and the peace discussions. The years 1919-1921 found Pratt serving in the Pacific initially in command of the USS New York and next as Commander Destroyer Force, Pacific Fleet. This duty was followed by a two-year membership on the General Board after which he served as a member of the technical staff assigned to the Washington arms limitation conference. He came to the Naval War College from command of Battleship Division Four of the Battle Fleet, with a brief stopover again on the General Board. Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22. For additional details on Pratt's life and naval career, see Gerald Wheeler, Admiral William Veazie Pratt, U.S. Navy: A Sailor's Life (Washington, D.C., 1974), (hereafter cited as Pratt: A Sailor's Life). Professor Wheeler has also prepared an abbreviated treatment of Pratt's career: "William Veazie Pratt, U.S. Navy: A Silhouette of an Admiral," NWC Review XXI (May, 1969), pp. 36-61.

advent of his second year he introduced his reorganization plan. Under the plan, the College would be restructured "along lines similar to that of the General Staff of the Army and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations of the Navy." In particular, Pratt noted two programmatic needs as affecting the organizational structure: determination of the proper relationship between the naval establishment and national resources, and improvement in joint Army-Navy operations.²

Admiral Pratt believed that these two deficiencies were the natural derivative of the College organization to 1926. Excessive emphasis had been placed upon the departmentalization of strategy and tactics when, in Pratt's view, strategy and tactics were really inseparable. Furthermore, future naval operations would fail unless careful attention was given to the totality of modern warfare. Until a proper understanding and appreciation existed regarding the mutual dependence of naval operations and national resources,

²Admiral William V. Pratt, "The Naval War College: An Outline of its Past and a Description of the Present," 20 May 1927, NWCA-RG 16, 15, (hereafter cited as NWC Outline: Past and Present). This presentation to the staff and student officers constitutes a statement of Pratt's stewardship. It examines the College program when he arrived, its mission as he saw it, and his attempts to place the College in the mainstream of Navy matters. The review is also a detailed expansion of his assessment of his presidency which he had submitted a few months earlier to the Chief of Naval Operations.

further advances in naval professionalism would be hindered.³

The prevailing contraction in the College mission was particularly vexing to Pratt. To offset this development, he believed that the College program should be thoroughly examined. Provisions should be made to include new, relevant material. Order material should be updated as appropriate. In this regard, Pratt cited the downgrading of international relations studies and the virtual neglect of joint operations problems. Other underutilized aspects of the College program included testing of the Department war plans and better cooperation between the College and the Fleet "in the staging and solution of the latter's practical sea problems."⁴

Convinced of the College's obscure mission and unsuitable organization, Pratt undertook to recast the organizational structure. Four departments (Command, Strategy, Tactics, and Correspondence) were restructured and renamed thusly: A-Logistics; B-Information; C-Operations, and D-Policy and Command. Under this plan the College's organizational functions more clearly

³Ibid., p. 16.

⁴Ibid., p. 18.

approached traditional line and staff identities. Pratt hoped that the new setup would lead to increase student officer capability in war planning. Also, he sought greater understanding of the prime elements of naval administration, particularly in the areas of logistics and joint Army-Navy operations. Pratt believed basically that "in matters pertaining to the Art of War" naval thought would proceed "along lines similar to the Army's way of thinking . . . After all there is no difference in principle between naval and military strategy and tactics though there are essential differences in movement and time."⁵

At this time a major difference in programs at the Army and Naval War colleges involved the study of international relations. The rationale for this difference is readily apparent. Long involved in naval

⁵Ibid., pp. 20-22, 33. Division A (Logistics) would handle questions of material, personnel, support, transport and priorities; Division B, information matters; Division C, Operations, would direct war planning, estimates of the situations, orders and problems; and Division D, Policy and Command, would administer the Correspondence Course, the contemplated advance course, the lecture series, and policy, international law, and foreign relations studies.

Wheeler, Pratt: A Sailor's Life, p. 243. Professor Wheeler believes that "like many presidents before and after him, he (Pratt) chose to tinker with the administrative structure and the curriculum."

planning and international conferences, Pratt saw the Navy as "the external buffer between our Federal State and other sovereign states . . . the Army is the internal protector of the country and broadly speaking it only comes in contact with foreign states after war has been declared." Consequently, naval officers should be prepared to perform a variety of assignments involving relations with foreign governments.⁶

Throughout his presidency Pratt was vitally concerned with joint Army-Navy operations. Perhaps more than any other Naval War College president of the interwar period, he saw clearly the lessons to be learned from the First World War in the areas of joint operations and overseas expeditions. At this time he believed "that there is a 'No Man's Land' existing between purely military operations and the purely naval operations which has not been thoroughly explored." Since joint operations were increasingly important to the two services, at least one major joint operations problem was included annually in the College program. Without increased experience in joint operations, Pratt maintained that future Navy and Army commanders would

⁶Pratt, NWC Outline: Past and Present, p. 33.

be woefully deficient in such skills when the need to employ them arose.⁷

In the years following the College reactivation in 1919, Sims and his successors had sought to establish working relationships with the Army War College as one means to improve future joint service efforts. The program involved not only exchange of information on respective programs, dissemination of completed work, but also the regular assignment of officers from the two services between the colleges.⁸

⁷Joint Army-Navy operations were not new experiences for the two services. Most earlier wars involving the United States had provided experience in joint cooperation. The big test had come in the First World War. After that conflict, several farsighted naval officers--Admiral Pratt was in the vanguard--pushed hard for education and training in joint operations. These officers saw specific benefits in the study of joint operations: (1) encouragement to both services to speak the same professional language; (2) enlargement of their mental horizons beyond the confines of their own services, and (3) provision of a first hand look at the psychology of the other service. See Colonel Dion Williams, USMC, "Coordination of Army and Navy Training," USNIP 48 (April, 1922), pp. 593-620.

An estimate of possible future adversaries and attendant war conditions constituted the initial step in determining the nature and extent of joint Army-Navy operations. This assessment served as a prelude to assignment of service duties and responsibilities and to development of personnel capabilities.

⁸The student officer exchange dated back to the establishment of the Naval War College in 1884. At that time, Lt. Tasker Bliss, USA, was named to the original College staff. In later years, Bliss advanced in grade reaching the generalship and Army Chief of Staff in 1917.

After the First World War, greater cooperation between the war colleges was advocated by officers in

Despite this effort, the Navy's concern increasingly drifted toward overseas movement of Marine Corps personnel. A derivative of this development was the Navy's rising interest in amphibious warfare and the problem of advanced bases. In the former area, however, the Marine Corps moved to the foreground in planning and development of operational doctrine and practice.⁹

both services. General Peyton C. March, USA, Chief of Staff, noted that information currently utilized by the Army War College was "incomplete in that it does not contain sufficient naval data." General March urged the colleges to consider a number of joint operations problems in their programs. By working together the services could develop an effective system of cooperation and prepare more comprehensive war plans. Quoted in Secretary of Navy to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 18 April 1920, NA-RG 80, Box 31.

⁹With the formation of the Fleet Marine Force in 1933, the Marine Corps assumed principal development and direction of the Navy's amphibious warfare capability.

Earlier the Joint Board had considered the problem of joint operations, declaring that unified command in joint operations would be based upon "paramount interest." That is, the chief operational or theatre command would be assumed by either Army or Navy, depending in each case upon which service had the primary interest therein.

In its concern for naval strategy and tactics during the interwar years, many observers believed the Naval War College program failed to appreciate the role of amphibious operations and the need for joint service cooperation. One highly competent observer, Rear Admiral J. M. Reeves, expressed his concern to Admiral Pratt thusly: "I have long felt that one of our weakest spots was in the Plans Division in Operations largely because of its wholly inadequate

Naval War College interest in joint operations appeared principally in the lecture series, student theses, and occasional publications dealing specifically with the subject. In the former media, military speakers began to appear in 1924 to discuss amphibious operations and Army-Navy cooperation.¹⁰ Early in the 1930's the College began to devise problems in amphibious warfare which were forwarded for study to the Marine Corps School, Quantico, Virginia. Staff personnel from this school annually journeyed to Newport to

personnel. I felt this very keenly while I was at the War College as to be apprehensive that in a large overseas expedition of the amphibious nature that we would find the Army plans largely forced upon us as because of the great lack of any adequate plans of our own." Rear Admiral J. M. Reeves to Pratt, 24 March 1927, NWCA-RG 2.

¹⁰ Navy Department, Annual Reports--1925, pp. 20-21. Optimistically the Secretary of Navy reported that

common study of various problems of the Army, Marine Corps, and officers of all branches of the Navy insures a closer cooperation not only between the different services but also between the various branches of the Navy

The Naval War College also issued several publications dealing with joint operations. A representative volume is "Joint Operations, Landing in Force," 4 October 1927, NWCA-RG 2. This publication contains "principles applicable to all landings" though logistical considerations receive only superficial treatment.

Within the lecture series, Admiral R. C. Coontz, Chief of Naval Operations, and Major General E. F. McGlachlin, USA, Army War College president, were two early speakers on the need for cooperation between the Army and Navy. Other speakers appearing regularly at

present their solutions to the College staff and student officers. Throughout the interwar period further emphasis was added to these studies through continuous assessment of the Gallipoli campaign. This campaign provided valuable insight into the complexity of modern joint operations.

Nor did the nature, role and impact of the College lecture series escape Pratt's scrutiny. While he believed the lectures to be vital contributions, he reminded the student officers that civilian lecturers, in particular, spoke as individuals and their beliefs did not necessarily coincide with stated national policy. To assure that the student officers were aware of the basic national policy, Pratt attempted to develop closer liaison with the State Department. The technical problems of the Navy would have to be solved in such a way as to support national policy and not contribute to its further erosion.¹¹

Throughout his College presidency Admiral Pratt added his voice to the pressure for an advanced course at the College. Although this course had been long espoused by his predecessors, Pratt saw such a course as

this time included Major General John A. LeJeune, USMC, who discussed the duties and responsibilities of the U.S. Marine Corps. Naval War College, Outline History, pp. 136-137, 154, 167.

¹¹Pratt, NWC Outline: Past and Present, pp. 26-27.

devoted "to the study and solution of broader military problems and to the study of international relations, carried to a more intensive degree than has been undertaken heretofore. To receive full value, however, the Department, must at an early date, perceive the necessity of inaugurating the advanced course, and provide the means for carrying on."¹²

These conditions led Pratt to believe the College had been too concerned with war gaming and had not explored thoroughly the other problems of war. This condition, excusable for the past, indefensible for the future, arose because most officers came to the Senior course at the College without previous preparation. Also, no advanced course existed to extend their studies, making it most difficult to progress beyond the elementary stages of study. Hopefully, the Department would awaken to the shortsightedness of this situation and approve establishment of an advanced course. Until that time, Pratt intended to work forcefully to raise the quality of the College experience.¹³

The assessment of the College operation which Admiral Pratt offered at this time is particularly

¹²Ibid., pp. 29-30.

¹³Ibid.

noteworthy. As a senior admiral of wide professional experience and of universally high regard within the naval service, Pratt was known as a strong supporter of the Naval War College. Such fealty, however, did not obscure his vision of the institution's accomplishments and deficiencies. His presidency was pledged to increase the College's leadership in naval matters and to assure its responsiveness to Navy needs. Despite this commitment, Pratt appears to have espoused Naval War College identity most effectively when away from Newport, most particularly as Chief of Naval Operations.¹⁴

3

The studies program for the Senior and Junior classes continued essentially as before--readings, lectures, war games and thesis writing--with strategic studies stressing scouting and search operations. Tactical studies continued their Jutland immersion.

A new element was introduced into the program when, in 1926, Admiral Pratt established extensive work in logistics. A new department was created to

¹⁴Wheeler, Pratt: A Sailor's Life, p. 241. At this point Wheeler speculates on the factors "that caused Admiral Pratt to devote six pages in his 'Autobiography' to the two years he spent at the Naval War College and then follow them with twenty-nine pages concerning his work in the fleet after leaving Newport."

direct these studies. Captain R. E. Bakenhus was named to direct the activity. While the experiences of the previous twenty-five years had clearly demonstrated the importance of logistics, the College had lagged in formalizing its study.¹⁵ Despite the appearance of periodic lectures on logistics and the experiences of the First World War, formal incorporation of logistics study into the College program had to await the Pratt presidency.

The experiences of the First World War had propelled the logistics function into the foreground of military planning.¹⁶ The British munitions crisis of

¹⁵Naval War College, Department of Logistics, "A History of Logistics at the Naval War College," 17 April 1951, NWCA-RG 4, pp. 1-2. Early in the College's existence the importance of logistics had received tacit recognition--usually in the form of professional lectures. A possible factor in the slow development of naval thought on logistical considerations may have been the increasingly extensive studies in this area taking place at the Army's General Service School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Army Industrial College, Washington, D.C.

¹⁶The modern United States Navy experienced the importance of the logistics functions during the naval operations of the Spanish-American war as well as during the cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1908.

Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, in his studies of the relationship of naval logistics to naval strategy, gave additional impetus to logistics studies. He believed logistics to be " . . . as vital to military success as daily food is to daily work . . . " Alfred Thayer Mahan, Armaments and Arbitration, (New York, 1912), pp. 196-217. At this time, Mahan was discussing

1915, for example, arose because munitions production and military requirements lacked coordination. The absence of central direction of war production brought home to British government and military leaders the close dependence of military logistical support upon the British civilian economy. In time, logistics was applied to matters dealing with industrial mobilization and, eventually, to the more comprehensive fields of economic mobilization and the civilian economy. With this development, logistics had come a long way from its initial definition dealing with matters of transporting, quartering, and supplying troops.¹⁷

With the official establishment of a Logistics department, Captain Bakenhus and his three-member staff¹⁸ quickly developed a course dealing with the

the Naval War College program. He labelled "logistics" as "movement"--a term later employed by Admiral Pratt to describe his newly established Operations department. Mahan also believed logistics to be the principal; strategy and tactics to be the agents.

¹⁷George C. Dyer, Naval Logistics (Annapolis, 1960), pp. 5, 13. The principal thrust of Vice Admiral Dyer's volume--a basic text in logistics--is upon applied logistics within the Navy. For a brief review of the nature and function of logistics, see Lieutenant Colonel Graham W. Rider, USAF, "Evolution of the Concept of Logistics," NWC Review XXXIII (December, 1970), pp. 24-33.

¹⁸Captain Bakenhus' assistants included Colonel Frank E. Evans, USMC; Captain A. H. Van Buren (CEC), USN, and LCol. Walter A. Reed, USA. Due to personnel transfers, only Bakenhus remained when the academic year concluded. Naval War College, Outline History, p. 182.

basic principles of naval logistics; the relationship of logistics and the principles of war, and logistics as a process to conserve effort and material. In the upcoming classwork logistics would be considered as part of the national offensive and as essential to maintaining superiority in the field.¹⁹

The course outline distributed to the student officers stressed that logistics operations were basically military; hence, the principles of war applied. In his opening remarks supplementing the outline, Captain Bakenhus apologized for its small size. However, he believed that if the outline were proportionate in size to the importance of the subject it would have been much larger. Bakenhus maintained that the College had not been a recent convert to the importance of logistics, citing the early lectures as well as the use of various logistics tables (tables of fire, fuel consumption at various speeds combined with tables of bunker capacity, limitations on ammunition carrying capacity of ships, and limitations on the useful life of naval guns) during the College's war games. More relevantly, Bakenhus pointed out the numerous strategic and operational problems which had involved the escort

¹⁹Naval War College, Department of Logistics, "Course on Logistics," 15 October 1926, NWCA-RG 4.

of a convoy of supply and fuel ships across the Pacific.²⁰

Bakenhus noted that there are three subdivisions under which the operations of war--or the conduct of war--are usually considered: strategy, tactics, and logistics. Many definitions have been written on strategy and tactics. Many other attempts have been made to draw the fine line between them. Until very recently the College had two divisions, one of strategy and one of tactics. Yet it was never possible to demarcate the exact limits between the two areas. Tactical problems arose from strategic situations and strategic problems involved tactical estimates. The College had solved this problem, Bakenhus believed, by combining strategy and tactics into the Operations department.²¹

The study of logistics as a separate subject, in Bakenhus' view, required constant recognition of its time relation to strategy and tactics. Logistics was seen as at the service of strategy and tactics. The latter cannot go beyond (exceed the limitations imposed) by logistics. The logistics operations are

²⁰Captain R. E. Bakenhus, (CEC), USN, "Logistics," 1 December 1926, NWCA-RG 13.

²¹Ibid.

neither strategy nor tactics for they require much skill and specialized knowledge in many areas.²²

Captain Bakenhus concluded his remarks stating that naval logistics begin with the Fleet and extend back through the shore establishment into many phases of civilian industrial life, both in peace and in war. It would be within this broad scope that the College course would be developed.²³

While the College administration would be satisfied with the start made at this time on the logistics course, the conviction remained that its success would only be partial until such time as the College course was lengthened to two years or until preliminary subjects were covered in preparatory courses.

The academic year 1926-1927 marked the formal establishment of Pratt's reorganization plan. In this term the work of the Senior and Junior courses were more closely coordinated, the Juniors assisting the

²²Ibid.

²³Although the Logistics department would be eliminated in a few years, logistical considerations continued to appear in the College study program. Vice Admiral Oscar C. Badger would recall that when he was a student at the College in 1936, "there was little consideration given to the subject of logistics." Admiral Badger added that, in regard to logistical matters, the Navy relied principally on "our small competent supply corps to get things done." Vice Admiral Oscar C. Badger, "The Principles of Command and Logistics," NWC Review 4 (December, 1951), p. 21.

Seniors on operations problems and collaborating with them in committee reports on specialized studies. However, the major shift in emphasis--toward logistical considerations--constituted the most significant change in curriculum emphasis.²⁴

In the weeks before his presidency concluded, Pratt apprised the Chief of Naval Operations about the College's health and welfare.²⁵ The Senior course was shaping up well, he thought, though more work was necessary in "quick decisions"²⁶ and minor tactics. The Junior class was "sound" though enrollment should be

²⁴Admiral Pratt proposed many other changes during his presidential duty at the College. However, they remained unimplemented. They included such proposals as requirement that completion of the Correspondence Course be made a pre-requisite for attendance at either the Junior or Senior course; exchange of staff members between the war colleges, and establishment of abbreviated versions of the Junior course at shore stations where large numbers of officers were present.

²⁵Pratt to Chief of Naval Operations, 3 February 1927, NWCA-RG 2.

²⁶"Quick decision" exercises were designed to provide experience in war game situations where the brevity of time available represented actual conditions more realistically. In the time normally available during war game problems of this period, the war game participants had more time to reflect on available options, thereby reducing the possibility of error. To correct this unreality, "quick decision" exercises were developed. For a description of "quick decision" rules, see Naval War College, Department of Operations, "General Procedure for the Conduct of 'Quick Decision' Problems," August, 1929, NWCA-RG 4.

increased. Of prime concern now to Pratt was the College's physical facilities. He noted that they were crowded, inadequate, with poorly lighted rooms being used to house three or four officers. The crowded space at the Naval War College contrasted markedly with the Army War College's "monumental" building in Washington. As other Naval War College presidents before him had maintained, Pratt underscored the cramped spaces for existing support activities. In short, the entire College building was "poorly adapted to the purpose it serves." Pratt lamented the inaction on previous recommendations he had submitted to the Chief of Naval Operations. Each year the situation worsened while replacement costs soared. It would be several years and dozens of requests later before action would be taken on the essence of these recommendations.

Pratt's proposal to enlarge class enrollments received little official encouragement. In his forwarding endorsement to the Chief of Naval Operations, the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation noted that "the establishment and growth of R.O.T.C. units, the policy of sending a number of older officers for aviation training, and the increase in recruiting officers have resulted in an increase in the shore establishment,

and the Bureau is unwilling at the present time to recommend an increase in the complement of activities."²⁷

When Pratt addressed the graduating classes in May, 1927, he refrained from any assessment of his presidency. While he engaged in considerable conceptual exhortation in his remarks (with only infrequent reference to the impact of the Naval War College experience on the individual officer's career pattern), he realized that the changes he had instituted must survive successor presidents if they were really to influence the College's long-term development. In the interim, however, he could not be charged with having maintained the status quo.²⁸

4

Throughout the mid-1920's, political and military considerations continued to exert influence on the

²⁷Chief, Bureau of Navigation endorsement to Pratt letter, dated 3 February 1927, NWCA-RG 2.

²⁸Admiral William V. Pratt, Graduation Address, "The Three Phases of a Naval Career," 27 May 1927, NWCA-RG 16. Pratt identified these phases as preparatory, executive and command.

Professor Wheeler summarizes Pratt's presidency at the War College as "not noteworthy for any earth-shaking changes" Wheeler maintains that Pratt's belief in the College is reflected, in part, by the fact he brought several members of the 1926 Senior Class to his staff. Gerald E. Wheeler, "William Veazie Pratt, U.S. Navy: A Silhouette of an Admiral," ibid., p. 50.

College curriculum. For one thing, the major signatories to the Washington disarmament treaties were expressing growing concern about the inadequacies of these pacts, particularly in the light of continued worldwide political instability and the rapid advances in science and technology as they affected military craft and weaponry.

In the United States progressive budgetary contractions placed additional constraints upon the military and naval establishments. Appropriations decreased in accordance with political pledges of economy; warships were decommissioned and placed in reserve, and re-enlistments became increasingly smaller. Throughout these cutbacks naval leadership clamored for additional warships in those classes not covered by existing arms limitations agreements.

In hopes of abating this agitation, President Coolidge called for a meeting of naval powers to be held during 1927 in Geneva, Switzerland. Specifically, he hoped to limit the construction of submarines, cruisers, and destroyers--presently unrestricted by existing treaties. The conference was targeted for failure when France and Italy would not send delegates but only unofficial observers. Representatives from the United States, Great Britain, and Japan held highly

divergent views over whether cruisers should be constructed with 6-inch or 8-inch guns. After several months of protracted but unproductive discussions the conference adjourned.

The continued clamor for disarmament as well as equally vigorous charges that existing agreements were violated regularly complicated efforts to implement existing naval policy. Determination of available ship types and development of expertise in their handling were hindered by this uncertainty. Furthermore, research was impeded by the inability to agree on whether the new end product would be in violation of existing accords or would be incorporated in new restrictions.

This atmosphere of uncertainty rendered more difficult the education and training of professional naval officers. The College study program in this era reflected Navy acceptance that the treaty signatories were adhering to their pledges. Such restraint could not but encourage a status quo mentality regarding the essential elements of strategy and tactics. As the search for solutions to these vital issues continued, the Naval War College underwent another change of command as Admiral Joel Roberts Poinsett

Pringle arrived in September, 1927, in relief of Admiral Pratt.²⁹

²⁹After leaving the Naval War College, Admiral Pratt continued to promote the College program throughout the Navy. In numerous articles and speeches he acknowledged his gratitude for the experiences obtained at the College. Two years after his departure he returned to address a Naval War College audience, remarking that "I owe a debt of gratitude not only to the Naval War College but to the Army War College for the opportunities they have given me to formulate my ideas upon this subject (higher command) . . . So thoroughly am I impressed by the training given by these two institutions that in the future I would hesitate to recommend to the highest command any man who had not been able to avail himself of the opportunities given here." Admiral William V. Pratt, "The Aspects of Higher Command," 30 August 1929, Pratt Papers.

From the Naval War College, Pratt moved to command of Battleship Divisions, Battle Fleet, with the rank of Vice Admiral. A year later he would be appointed Commander-in-Chief, Battle Fleet, with the accompanying rank of Admiral which he retained for the balance of his naval career. In September, 1930, he was appointed to the top position in the Navy--Chief of Naval Operations. While in this position he served as adviser to the American delegation at the London naval conference. He retired in June, 1933. Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22.

CHAPTER VI

THE MIDDLE PERIOD, 1925-1930

PART II. THE PRINGLE YEARS, 1927-1930

Admiral J. R. P. Pringle, the College's fifteenth president, was in his thirty-sixth year of naval service when he returned to Newport.¹ During this time he had compiled an enviable record of professional accomplishment. He returned to the College well acquainted with its operations and with a strong desire to maintain the impetus which Pratt had provided.

During the first year of the Pringle presidency the College program proceeded along the lines established the previous year by Admiral Pratt. While strategy and tactical studies, through repetitive

¹Admiral J. R. P. Pringle was born in Georgetown, North Carolina, 4 February 1873. A member of the class of 1892 at the Naval Academy, Pringle, in the years to follow, moved through the usual career pattern of sea and shore assignments marked with increasing command responsibilities. He served in European waters during the First World War, concluding his service there on Admiral Sims' staff in London. In May, 1919, he reported to the Naval War College for duty under instruction. Upon completion of the course, Pringle served in sequence one year on the College staff, one year in a major sea command, two additional years on the College staff, and two years with the Battle Fleet, before returning to Newport in September 1927. Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22.

examination, sought to improve prevailing doctrine and practice, logistics studies expanded, particularly in relation to vital geographic, historical, and economic factors in the western Pacific area. In particular, Japan, the Carolines, Truk, Pescadores and Kuriles--headlines in a distant date--received specific attention.

The specific thrust of the College program can be noted in the academic schedule for the year 1927-1928.² While the Pacific area constituted the main center of analysis, the Senior Class studies involved strategical, logistical, and tactical factors in a BLUE advance across the Pacific (unrestricted as to route). In particular, class members were to analyze BLUE's plan for supply maintenance and repair until such time as a base has been secured. This phase of the study revealed the Navy's continuing recognition of the vital role of advanced bases in any projected overseas operation. To understand and to appreciate the workings of an adversary's mind, as well as to anticipate his moves, Senior Class student officers were also required to develop a general plan of war for ORANGE and an operational plan to meet BLUE's attack.

²Naval War College, "Naval War College Course, 1927-1928," 29 April 1927, NWCA-RG 18.

In order to prepare adequately the above action plans, the Senior Class officers were to include in their broad "estimate of the situation" and their plans for BLUE and ORANGE, such considerations as financial conditions, material requirements, neutral sources of supply, protection of trade routes, relations with neutrals, national characteristics, and the international law situation. At the conclusion of the year's work, the student officers were expected to provide answers to two major questions: (1) Can BLUE provide the necessary supply, maintenance, and repair facilities required by a BLUE fleet which would make possible a rapid advance across the Pacific at the outbreak of war, or (2) Must the advance of BLUE fleet be delayed until a safe supply and maintenance organization can be provided?³

In addition to this work the Senior and Junior classes had to complete required area theses in addition to participation in committee studies of selected topics. Senior Class members had to prepare individual theses in Policy and Command while participating in committee studies on naval organization, strategy and tactics, and logistics. In the latter two areas, Senior Class committee members were assisted by assigned Junior

³Ibid.

Class members. The latter were also required to prepare a thesis on Tactics and Command.⁴

The study committees, ranging from three to five members, with the highest ranking member designated as chairman, were furnished guidelines in order to economize time and effort. In the 1927-1928 academic year, for example, the Strategy and Tactics committees were to consider these elements in a selected naval campaign. The Logistics committees, on the other hand, were to consider the strategic materials of BLUE and ORANGE along with a specific study of selected BLUE strategic materials. Finally, the committees were to study the repair and docking requirements for a BLUE campaign in the western Pacific, the protection of trade routes for BLUE strategic materials, and the possibilities of neutral supply in a BLUE campaign in the western Pacific.⁵

The search for solutions to the problems anticipated in a western Pacific conflict is revealed in the content of the international law course. In these studies the student officers were to consider possible problems arising between great neutrals and the United States consequent to a war in the western Pacific involving a determination to stop all supplies entering

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

the ports of belligerents and any neutral. These "incident" studies in international law brought into sharp focus the need for naval officers to be well versed in international law. In the 1920's the recollection of British actions in the First World War were still vivid and the Navy was desirous of assuring that naval officers were knowledgeable as to their rights, duties, and responsibilities.

As the Logistics department began its second (and last) year of operations in 1927, its new head, Captain E. C. Kalbfus, sought to improve the course substance through an increase in the number of lectures relating to logistics. Notwithstanding, the approach to logistics continued to be somewhat narrowly conceived and underdeveloped. For example, in a logistics problem representative of the period the student officers worked out the details involved in the distribution of essential items within a fleet organization--after they had been delivered to commanders in the field. Working back from this point in time, the broader aspects of the logistics problem were considered only in skeleton form. The student officers catalogued, cross-indexed and classified the information derived from the practical work. The data accumulated were considered to represent the best available information on the

needed material or service. In the final analysis, the department hoped to develop data on all supplies and services vital to naval operations, sources of supply, preparation and distribution times and costs, and potential procurement problems. However, at this time, the Logistics department staff saw the subject matter as beyond complete development. Limited College staff and resources would permit logistical studies of only the most general nature, leaving development of detailed plans to department specialists.⁶

Toward the end of his initial year as Naval War College president, Admiral Pringle undertook another revision of the College's organizational structure. Pratt's four-division alignment was reduced to three: Operations, Intelligence, and the Secretariat. The decision to revise the College operating framework was based on the belief that "the academic staff, which had been organized to approximate an executive staff into departments of Command, Operations and Logistics did not possess the same functions as an executive staff." Furthermore, there were no definite lines of functional differentiation when the academic staff was assigned to academic instruction. Another reason impelling Admiral Pringle to restructure the College operation was the

⁶Naval War College, Outline History, p. 229.

growing conviction that tactics flowed from strategy (national, military, and naval). There was a middle ground--operations--in which Pringle saw both strategy and tactics affecting the decisions and courses of action.⁷

Thus ended Pratt's reorganizational plan. The anticipated "reorganization to meet future needs" had not been sustained.⁸ Although seriously mutilated, the spirit of Pratt's reorganizational thrust continued to inhere in the Pringle format. For one thing, logistics problems (which had lost a departmental identity) became a part of the Operations studies, covered by lectures on logistical subjects and included in selected war games. Pringle's reorganizational plan would exist, without major change, until 1931.

As constituted for the academic year 1928-1929, the Operations department (headed by Captain Samuel W. Bryant) supervised classroom work in strategy and tactics for the Senior and Junior classes while the newly established Intelligence department (Captain E. C. Kalbfus shifted from the abolished Logistics department to direct its activities) undertook to provide academic support to both classes. The Intelligence department prepared lectures

⁷Ibid., pp. 216, 264.

⁸Pratt, NWC Outline: Past and Present, NWCA-RG 16, p. 23.

and outlines dealing with a conglomerate consisting of international law, economics, national policy and national strategy, naval strategy, historical events, tactics, command and geography. These tasks were in addition to preparation of reading course material and review of student officers' theses. The third organizational element under the Pringle plan was the Secretariat (later to become the Administrative department). This activity was assigned the function of providing administrative support services.⁹

For this academic year the Operations department reduced the number of study problems from six to five in order to provide more time for individual study. In these problems, the department hoped to broaden the student officers' conceptual experience through consideration of (1) the problems of joint attack and joint defense of insular territory; (2) the naval problems attending defense or attack of a line of communications; (3) the problems of attack on, or defense of, naval forces defending a specified area and (4) the problems of fleet use in a naval campaign. Most of these problems involved preparation of chart and board maneuvers.¹⁰

⁹Naval War College, Operations Department, "Senior Class Syllabus, 1929-1930," July, 1929, NWCA-RG 4.

¹⁰Ibid.

The department envisioned a cumulative benefit from this concentration: more time would be available for individual estimates of the situation involving Japan, thereby facilitating preparation of plans and orders believed to possess increasingly high future relevance. Therefore, throughout the entire program Japan was assuming the role of most likely adversary.¹¹

The Operations department plans for the Junior Class involved consideration of approximately the same subject matter though at a lower fleet administrative and organizational level. The Junior Class and Senior Class worked together on the Jutland, Coronel, and Falkland islands assignments as well as on one operational problem. In the latter task, it was hoped to acquaint student officers of the Junior Class with the exercise of small units in large operations and with the staff functions of flag officers afloat.¹²

Junior Class work in operations also included the regular emphasis on estimating the situation, and formulating orders. A series of tactical problems were also examined whereby the student officer became better acquainted with the employment of various ship types in a fleet action plus the employment of a limited number of

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Naval War College, Operations Department, "Junior Class Syllabus, 1929-1930," July, 1929, NWCA-RG 4.

surface, subsurface, and air units. Quite naturally, all problems concluded at the war game board.¹³

Notwithstanding this intensified consideration of the Japanese as America's most likely future opponent, the student officers--in their practical work--were not required to determine the basic mission supporting the operation under study. However, the College staff did believe that the formulation of the basic mission was an essential in war planning and that the student officers should receive training in this function. However, they had concluded that this experience could only accrue from an advanced class. In the interim, the staff would use the Intelligence department--with its emphasis on research methods and historical perspective--to introduce the student officer to the development of basic policy concepts, basic missions, and war planning processes. Until that time when an advanced class would be established, the College staff believed student officer development in the planning phase of high command would be substantially underdeveloped.¹⁴

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴This conviction may well have been a subtle attempt to recapture some of the essential role the College had fulfilled in war planning prior to the establishment of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in 1915. Indeed, the early drafts of the mission of the proposed advanced course referred to a planning function which, in time, was negated by the Chief of Naval Operations.

The regular sequence of lectures continued during the 1925-1930 period. In each phase, professional and academic, several lecturers made single appearances whereas others returned regularly throughout the years to present their specialties.¹⁵

Among the academic lecturers, Professor James Q. Dealey continued to discuss American foreign policy and its implications, noting that by the year 2000 A.D. all the states in the Americas "should have developed a cordial entente that would unite them for common defense and general welfare . . . "¹⁶ and that the world outlook was generally peaceable except in the Far East where there were "a few dark clouds."¹⁷ Dealey believed America was the hope of the future and "the proudest boast of the man of the future will not be ROMANUS but AMERICANUS SUM."¹⁸

¹⁵In the case of civilian lecturers, notice of their appearance was preceded by distribution--via various bulletin boards--of background material on the speaker, and, if available, an outline of his forthcoming talk.

¹⁶James Q. Dealey, "Policy Situation of the Americas," 23 July 1926, NWCA-RG 14.

¹⁷James Q. Dealey, "Survey of the World Situation as it affects the United States," 5 August 1927, ibid.

¹⁸James Q. Dealey, "The United States and the Far East," 26 August 1927, ibid.

In the academic year 1928-1929, Dealey was succeeded by Professor L. M. Goodrich who lectured on American policy within a framework of political philosophy strongly reminiscent of Dealey's convictions.¹⁹ The other academic disciplines continued to receive regular one-time presentations.

The military lectures of this period covered the usual spectrum of professional topics. Many of the presentations emphasized the historical development of military and naval matters. When specific developments were considered in operating areas such as naval aviation, communications, ordnance, submarines, and fleet maneuvers, the presentations were most often classified. This latter condition, however, characterized much of the class work undertaken at the Naval War College.²⁰

The combined lecture program at this time was almost equally divided between military and academic subjects. This proportion does not include the many presentations made by College staff members to the student officers in support of regularly assigned classwork. In the academic

¹⁹At the end of the 1927-1928 academic year, Dealey retired from his positions at Brown University and the Naval War College, receiving emeritus standing from the former. He accepted the editorship of the Dallas (Texas) News, a position he held until his death in January, 1937.

²⁰By May, 1974, the details and decisions of the College's war games during the interwar period generally remained classified. This condition was due primarily to administrative obstacles (personnel shortages) rather than to inherent security sensitivity.

year 1929-1930, there was a marked decrease in the number of formal lectures. Only nineteen formal professional and academic lectures were scheduled for the year 1929-1930 whereas thirty-nine had been offered during the previous year. Interestingly, government specialists (particularly from the State Department) began to appear in increasing numbers.²¹

As the decade drew to a close the number of professional presentations by staff members and guest speakers also decreased. This condition may well have reflected Admiral Pringle's desire to emphasize the practical aspects of the College program. Then, too, arranging for military personnel to come to Newport was a vexatious task since military duties elsewhere often hindered the scheduling process. Frequently the military specialists in Washington preferred to forward their prepared remarks to the College for presentation by a staff member--a practice which Admiral Sims had strongly discouraged.²²

8

The student officer theses and committee studies prepared during the 1929-1930 period reflect the Navy's

²¹Naval War College, Outline History, pp. 236-237, 256.

²²Sims to Chief of Naval Operations, 6 May 1922, NA-RG 80, Box 31. Sims observed that personal presentations, followed by a discussion session, constituted a more valuable learning environment "however valuable material in these prepared lectures may be."

concern with the rising military threat presented by Japan as well as a desire to assure that the United States fulfilled the construction allowances permitted under existing disarmament treaties.

During the Pratt presidency these requirements for the Senior Class had been modified substantially. Strategy and Tactics theses were discontinued. Only the Policy thesis continued. In lieu of the discontinued theses, Senior Class members were divided into committees and assigned specific topics for study and analysis. The topical assignments--centered principally around major British and German naval operations in the First World War; Japanese and Russian naval operations in their 1904-1905 conflict, and Nelson's campaign leading up to and including the Battle of Trafalgar (and French naval reactions thereto)--required each committee member to study a segment of the operations, and to submit it to the team chairman who would synopsise the individual reports into a team presentation to be made to College staff and student officers. This final presentation included a brief narrative of historical events leading to the campaign, the campaign objectives, and strategic, tactical and logistical considerations and their inter-relationships. Team conclusions were to compare campaign objectives and results, and to determine if paramount principles of war

had been selected and correctly applied.²³

Committee studies marked a departure from the individual thesis effort. While the results and conclusions reached by the respective committees did not vary from those developed in the individual assignments and at the game board, student officers acquired experience in operational specialization as well as in coordination and synthesis.²⁴

The Policy theses of this period reflect a heavy emphasis on historical development. The theses became increasingly longer but not necessarily more analytical. Similar sequences, propositions and conclusions flowed virtually uninterrupted through the years. Yet the observations of the student officers are informative and relevant since many occupied positions of highest command during the Second World War.

Commander H. E. Kimmel's thesis on Policy followed the well-trod path of fundamental policy definitions, types of policy, factors and conditions influencing policy formulation, war and policy relationships, as well as other general aspects of policy development. Kimmel did

²³Naval War College, Memorandum for Senior Class of 1926, 8 December 1925, NA-RG 80, Box 501.

²⁴Pratt to Chief of Naval Operations, 10 December 1925, ibid. Admiral Pratt admitted that "the general purpose of this change is to bring out the ability of officers to deliver orally the result of their studies before the class, rather than in a prepared, written thesis on the subject."

not accept the general feeling that the Japanese would be our major opponent in the Orient. Points of difference between the United States and Japan were of "minor importance." Kimmel saw American policy in the Orient as "consistent and sound." The most probable war in the Far East would be between Japan and Russia, though intensification of Japan's imperialistic policy might well lead to a clash with the United States. If the latter occurred, Kimmel believed it would be over Japanese policies in China, but that other European nations would be involved though the lineup was obscure.²⁵

Three members of the class of 1927, Commanders R. E. Ingersoll, R. A. Spruance, and E. C. Kalbfus sounded familiar themes in their Policy theses. Commander Ingersoll noted that earlier American foreign policies were "purely political in character" whereas policy in the twentieth century appears to be more economically oriented. He agreed with writers of the period that this emphasis on economic factors would require that "competing governments will practically be forced to some business agreement providing for a great measure of international

²⁵Commander H. E. Kimmel, Class of 1926 Thesis: "The Foreign Policies of the United States," 5 December 1925, NWCA-RG 12.

cooperation in trade and finance."²⁶ On the other hand, Commander Spruance noted the increasing need for American leadership in world affairs. The American perspective was distorted, in Spruance's estimation, because of a disproportionate emphasis upon war debt collection, non-participation in settlement of postwar political problems, and a complacency arising from unexampled prosperity have combined "to make the United States most unpopular in certain countries of Europe." Hopefully, Spruance concluded, "time will serve to soften this, and then it is hoped that the real United States will be seen."²⁷

Commander Kalbfus chose to stress the "manifest destiny" theme, noting that having reached the Pacific our westward expansion policy no longer possesses "a logical direction." Except for presently unforeseen developments, "our further acquisition of territory can scarcely include more than the peaceful transfer to us of certain islands in the West Indies, or of those lying off our Atlantic coast. Our territorial expansion policy . . . is consummated."²⁸

²⁶Commander R. E. Ingersoll, Class of 1927 Thesis: "The Foreign Policies of the United States," 4 December 1926, ibid.

²⁷Commander R. A. Spruance, ibid.

²⁸Commander E. C. Kalbfus, ibid.

Four members of the Senior Class of 1929 treated American foreign policy development, their emphasis ranging between idealism and realism. Captain B. McCandless believed a recent statement by President Calvin Coolidge represented well the need for the United States to be alert and maintain its military strength if foreign policy implementation was to be effective.²⁹

Commander J. B. Oldendorf constituted a rare exception in that his thesis concentrated on American foreign policy regarding Europe rather than the Far East. His major point maintained that, despite disclaimers to the contrary, the reparations question represented a substantial hurdle to achievement of peace in Europe.³⁰

Commander A. G. Kirk was convinced American foreign policies in the past fitted well during the nation's early development. Indeed an isolationist posture revealed admirable restraint on the part of the United States. The experience of recent years (capped with participation in the First World War) required the United States to step forward and accept its responsibility for world leadership. Americans must recognize that "the

²⁹Captain B. McCandless, Class of 1929 Thesis: "The Foreign Policies of the United States," 27 April 1929, ibid.

³⁰Commander J. B. Oldendorf, ibid.

modern world is too closely knot (sic) for continued and complete isolation."³¹

Commander John S. McCain, on the other hand, diverted from the usual historical treatment to observe perceptively that "with confidence in the keenness of our salesmen we will continue to demand the Open Door everywhere, a step just a bit inconsistent with our Tariff Wall." McCain approved of American foreign policy practices which had avoided "entangling alliances" of any sort. As a result, the United States did hold enough signed I.O.U.'s from the nations of the world to make the phrase a doubtful one."³²

By the end of the 1920 decade the emphasis in policy theses shifted to contemporary affairs. The student officer was permitted at this time to select a specific American foreign policy and to assess its effectiveness in any selected geographical area. In this setting, Commander W. A. Glassford traced the history of the United States as reflected in its twin desires for security and prosperity and the impact on foreign policy development. While he believed that "for the present the United States must and will adhere to her old political traditions . . . it is her manifest destiny to be supreme

³¹Commander A. G. Kirk, ibid.

³²Commander John S. McCain, ibid.

on Earth: the very impetus given by the weight of her latent powers insures that she reach this pinnacle (sic) whether desired or not." Understandably, Glassford believed this course of destiny was facilitated by the presence of a strong navy. In the course of developing this destiny Glassford also noted that the "key to prosperity will lie in intensive cultivation of the foreign markets." The time has come, he noted, "when American foreign relations will concern very vitally the business men throughout the country."³³

Commander T. C. Kinkaid disdained the analytical for the reportorial, preferring to review historically the development of American foreign policy to 1930.³⁴

Tactics theses submitted during the 1925-1930 period possessed no more originality or incisiveness than heretofore. These theses, required of student officers in the Junior Class, necessarily meant fighting old battles ad infinitum. The battle of Jutland, for example, received overwhelming concentration.³⁵ The moves of the

³³Commander W. A. Glassford, Class of 1930 Thesis: "The Foreign Policies of the United States," 26 April 1930, ibid.

³⁴Commander T. C. Kinkaid, ibid.

³⁵Captain Harris Laning, "The Tactics Department of the War College and the Relation between it and the Fleet," 7-12 August 1922, NA-RG 80, Box 31. At this time Laning, speaking during the Fleet-War College sessions in Newport, revealed that "the War College conception of the Naval Battle of the future . . . is based on the present War Instructions and follows closely the general plan employed by both fleets in the Battle of Jutland."

participating admirals became a virtual litany of responses for the student officers. The engagement was considered from all tactical aspects, ship type performances, and individual leadership qualities of the principal participating officers. Only in the latter area did student officers reveal any variety of perceptions.

9

An element of the College program which expanded and diversified during the 1920's was the Correspondence Course. This program operated in support of the basic College curriculum by making selected and concentrated phases thereof available to naval officers unable to spend a year at Newport.³⁵

³⁶Naval War College, "The Naval War College Correspondence Course," 3 May 1920, NWCA, Record Group 25, General Subjects, (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG 25). The initial four installments of the revised course contained a series of introductory lectures treating of the estimate of the situation; formulation of orders; elements of strategy and tactics; logistics, and training for higher command. Next, there followed a series of reprints of lectures presented by visiting academic and professional specialists. Understandably, staff members considered the practical work (problem-solving) to be the most important phase of the course. The problems, increasingly complex, emphasized basic principles of strategy and tactics, and sought to develop the ability to follow a logical course of reasoning in the preparation of the all-important estimate.

The scouting and screening phases of the course introduced the registrant to variations in these operations while refraining from recommending any one as the best procedure.

Upon reactivation of the College in 1919, the small staff assigned to the Correspondence Course activity labored to develop reading lists and problems in strategy, tactics, scouting and screening. The Strategy and Tactics course quickly recaptured its earlier popularity. Its registrants numbered 395 by December, 1919. Although the course had continued on a vastly reduced basis throughout the war years and despite the increased enrollment in the first postwar year, only thirty officers had completed the entire sequence of assignments. Yet at this time (1919-1920) the cumulative registrations since the course's original establishment in 1914 totaled 828. During the academic year 1924-1925, the registration reached 469 and the completions, 54. At the decade's end registrations had risen to 500 (down from a 1928 enrollment figure of 581), whereas completions only totaled 78.³⁷

In 1924 the correspondence offerings were expanded to include a course in International Law for

The registrant's solutions were examined for sound reasoning and logical courses of action. No critical comments were offered unless basic principles of strategy and tactics were violated. The correspondence staff did not claim its solutions were the only or best solutions, just that their solutions might be "more acceptable" since its members were invariably more experienced.

³⁷Naval War College, Outline History, pp. 117, 163, 175, 277-281.

naval reserve officers. This course achieved instantaneous popularity (albeit temporary) during its initial year when 167 officers enrolled, and 25 completed the required five lessons. In 1925, however, a substantial number of completions and disenrollments reduced the course enrollment to 32. For the balance of the decade registrations ranged between 35-50.³⁸

An increasing concern with the slow responses from some correspondence course registrants moved the staff in 1926 to strengthen administrative procedures. A new change required registrants to submit a lesson within a six-month period or face disenrollment without penalty. This move assured that current registrations were active and that the rolls were not cluttered with inactive registrants.³⁹

Another major action undertaken within the correspondence unit during the 1920 decade involved establishment of an advanced course in International Law in 1926. Only one officer enrolled in the course that year and for the balance of the decade the enrollment remained discouragingly low, never exceeding a half-dozen registrants.⁴⁰

³⁸Ibid., pp. 163, 175.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 280.

In 1929 it became necessary to establish a "Special Course in Strategy and Tactics" for naval reserve officers who, by a ruling of the Chief of Naval Operations, were ineligible to receive registered (classified) publications. This course (one-half the length of the basic Strategy and Tactics course) was well received at the outset. However, enrollment dropped markedly (as occurred in most other correspondence courses) because of a combination of factors: the tightening of the Department policy on naval reserve officers counting such study for pay drill purposes; and the decrease in promotions which reduced the number of officers enrolled to secure examination exemptions.⁴¹

Throughout the 1920 decade the small staff administering the Correspondence Course activity sought to make the program viable. Course content was continuously updated to include the latest developments contained in the regular program; increased enrollments were sought through expanded offerings and acceptance of completed work in lieu of specified promotion

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 250-251. An additional problem in the administration of correspondence courses involved the protection of classified information contained in some lesson assignments. Course registration was regularly denied solely because the applicant lacked proper stowage facilities. The Asiatic station was a particularly sensitive location, classified scouting problems, for example, were generally not forwarded to that area.

examinations,⁴² and the enrollment procedure was streamlined to assure accuracy of administrative procedures and to facilitate prompt examination of student solutions.

During the first decade of postwar operations the student life pattern at the College normalized. It remained constant thereafter until the late 1930's when an expanding naval establishment caused considerable change in student life matters.

Naval personnel normally rotate between sea and shore assignments. The attractiveness of each is vitally conditioned by shipmates, physical facilities, and available creature comforts. While the Newport area appeared to have a surfeit of attractions, an assignment to the Naval War College was not without inconveniences.

Most student officers reporting to Newport were married, were accompanied by their families, and were in need of adequate housing. Since little or no housing

⁴²The Correspondence course received an important boost when the Bureau of Navigation authorized the acceptance by the Naval Examining Board of Certificates of Completion of the Strategy and Tactics course in lieu of examination in these areas for ensigns, lieutenants (junior grade), and lieutenants (senior grade). Bureau of Navigation, Circular Letter 47-25, 22 September 1925.

was available at the College and training station, student officers looked to the local community. Student officers needed housing in a hurry, thereby placing themselves at the mercy of community realtors whose general reputation at the College was suspect.⁴³ The College archives contain numerous requests for housing information from incoming student officers. While optimistic replies went forward from the College, caution was also utilized. Incoming officers were advised to seek housing as quickly as possible upon notification of assignment to the College. Although every officer found housing sufficient to meet his needs, the space was not always commodious.

Bachelor officers, possessing more mobility and adaptive to small quarters, often found space in local boarding houses or doubled up with classmates to rent apartments. In this way their need for quarters was solved more easily since they moved into quarters often occupied by members of the previous classes.

⁴³Sims to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 27 September 1920, NA-RG 80, Box 501. After one year of College operations, Sims noted no improvement in the housing situation, adding the "real estate agents are fully informed as to every officer's circumstances and his urgency in obtaining a house and they do not fail to take advantage of such urgency. The situation regarding boarding houses is similar."

Whatever the arrangement, personnel residing off the base faced the task of movement to and from the College. This daily journey was not difficult for officers residing in Newport and environs. However, officers residing in Jamestown, located on Conanicut Island in Narragansett Bay, had to rely on water transportation to travel to the College.

While the staff and student officers were able to shop at the station commissary, many other items had to be purchased from local merchants. The higher prices at these stores consumed much of the officers' monthly salaries. Thus, expenditures for the basic needs of housing and food left little surplus for outside social activity. Amenities were available, however, in the form of a medical officer who made house calls and commissary and laundry services which included home delivery.

These stringencies were also offset by the homogeneity and unity of the officer group. During most of the interwar period, the military and naval establishments maintained a low public profile. Except for major air and marine disasters, plus the achievements of a growing group of military aviators, few new military heroes emerged to capture public attention. Social contact between the naval and local community was

generally limited. Yet major civic and College events facilitated contact with the social colony, itself distinct from the local community.

Social activities abounded at the College frequently centering around Navy-oriented events. There were the endless parties and dances attendant to birthdays, weddings, promotions, arrivals, departures, graduations, and visiting foreign and domestic dignitaries: political, military, and business. Receptions were held regularly by the College president to which staff and student officers were invited.

Physical facilities in the area were available for group and/or individual interests.⁴⁴ Baseball, golf and tennis were particularly enjoyed by the College community.

This social routine complemented a College schedule that required class attendance, in civilian clothes,

⁴⁴ Sims to Secretary of Navy, 16 June 1919, Sims Papers, Container 89. While conditions improved somewhat with the passage of time, Admiral Sims went on record early concerning the inferior recreational facilities in the area. "Officers are not in any case so well provided . . . they are left to their own devices as regards the matter of their physical fitness. Newport, for example, offers little or no encouragement for exercise outside of the few tennis courts at the Torpedo and Training Stations and at the Naval Hospital . . . It is true, of course, quite true that walking facilities exist in the vicinity of Newport but this is not, to my mind, a successful solution to the problem."

normally from 0900-1200, 1330 to 1530, except from 1 November to 1 April when the class day was extended to 1630. Classes on Saturday and Wednesday were scheduled only for 0900-1230.⁴⁵

Like other duty assignments there were pluses and minuses associated with the time spent at Newport.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Naval War College, "Information for Student Officers," 24 January 1927, NWCA-RG 2, pp. 3-10.

⁴⁶In this regard the reactions of three Naval War College graduates of the interwar period--Admirals Ernest J. King, William F. Halsey, Jr., and Raymond A. Spruance--are interesting.

Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., USN, and Lieutenant Commander J. Bryan, III, USNR, Admiral Halsey's Story, (New York, 1947), p. 54. In retrospect Halsey recalled that "few years in a naval officer's life are more pleasant than this one. It is restful because you have no official responsibilities, and it is stimulating because of the instruction, the exchange of ideas, the chance to test your pet theories on the game board, and the opportunity to read up on professional publications."

King and Whitehill, Fleet Admiral, p. 242. Admiral King's ten months at Newport were considered "refreshing and valuable." During this time King had, "in addition to the prescribed courses of study, time to browse in the excellent library, to reflect upon his past and future service, and to consider the world situation, particularly in those aspects that appeared to be leading toward war. What he learned of Pacific strategy . . . proved its usefulness in time."

Commander Thomas B. Buell, "Admiral Raymond A. Spruance and the Naval War College: Part I - Preparing for World War II," NWC Review XXIII (March, 1971), p. 33. Admiral Spruance, a student and staff officer at the College during the interwar period and a future president of the College, considered "that what I learned during those years was of the utmost value to me, in the opportunity to broaden my knowledge of

However, the personal and professional stimulation associated with attendance at the College, combined with its increasing importance in determining future command assignments, more than compensated for any and all difficulties.

11

As the Pringle presidency entered its final year, the College marked the first decade of postwar operations. During this time the College leadership sought to assure the College's continued development and contribution to the needs of the Navy. This expectancy was not without problems. To determine the magnitude of "development" and "contribution" requires at least two points of reference: point of origin and point of present position. While this measurement is more easily achieved when distinctly quantifiable points are involved, educational programs constitute "a process industry" and effectiveness and efficiency can be elusive and imprecise (as Sims reiterated in his remarks to the 1919 class). When only a limited effort is made to devise administrative control points, "rule of thumb" assessments usually follow. This latter

international affairs and of naval history and strategy . . . This to me was of the utmost value throughout the years of WW II in the Pacific."

administrative technique may best describe the appraisal of Naval War College effectiveness throughout the 1920's and, indeed, the entire interwar period.

During the 1920's the Chief of Naval Operations was authorized "to direct" the activities of the College. In the course of this direction the Bureau of Navigation would provide essential support functions. In actuality, the College operated somewhat independently, free to devise its own program (subject to consultation with the Chief of Naval Operation and/or the Bureau of Navigation) as long as student officers received training for "higher command"--the generally agreed upon basic College mission. While the successive presidents of the 1920's viewed the mission either narrowly or expansively, little attempt was made (other than by Admirals Sims and Pratt) to ascertain the diverse nature of higher command, its duties and responsibilities, and the resultant impact on the College program.

The chief administrative control measures available to the Chief of Naval Operations regarding College activities were the annual budget, an annual summary of activities (consisting of brief, simple tabular data on student enrollment, staff membership and other

miscellaneous items), and formal and informal consultations with the President of the Naval War College. The College budget, wherein activities were reduced to the measure of the dollar sign, was always influenced more by Fleet operating needs than by Naval War College programmatic needs. Small wonder that from this paucity of firm data any measure of institutional effectiveness would lean heavily upon subjective considerations.

As characteristic of educational institutions, much of the College output defied objective measurement. Admiral Sims recognized early that attainment of the College mission would be hampered, in part, if the College lacked the basic information necessary for its publications, lectures, staff studies, war gaming problems, and theses. In this regard, he sought designation of a liaison officer to act in matters between the Chief of Naval Operations and the College. As an initial step, Sims stressed the need for the College to be on all government "standard distribution lists."⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Sims to Chief of Naval Operations, 10 June 1919, NA-RG 80, Box 501. Sims stressed the essentiality of close relations between the College, the Department and the Fleet. He recommended the appointment of a liaison officer who would assure that "the Naval War College should be kept fully informed regarding changes in policy, tactics, logistics, etc., and will be able to accomplish its mission than if it were in ignorance." Captain Harry Yarnell was appointed to this liaison duty. Sims observed later "that the usefulness of the

As the decade passed, correspondence flowed regularly between the College, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Bureau of Navigation as the College sought to expand its Department, Fleet, and bureau data base.

War College depends chiefly upon keeping the games up to date. If the rules of the game are not right, particularly in reference to gunfire under various phases of maneuver, percentage of hits at different ranges, penetration of armor and so forth, the conclusions drawn from maneuvers are sure to be erroneous. In fact, conclusions drawn from games played with wrong rules would not only be useless, but might be very dangerous." Sims to Chief of Naval Operations, 11 January 1922, NA-RG 80, Box 501.

C. R. Miller (Acting) to Secretary of Navy, 28 March 1921, ibid. At this time, Captain Miller believed the College was not on the Department's standard distribution lists for its Circular Letters. He noted that the College files frequently do not contain copies of Circular Letters cited in Department correspondence. Miller recognized that part of the problem might be "due to the fact that the Naval War College is within the confines of the First Naval District but not within the jurisdiction of the Commandant of that district, and is not on the mailing list of the First District as a unit of that district." The Circular Letter was only one type of standardized communications forms issued by the Department. A breakdown here might well be repeated in the distribution of other regular Department issuances, thereby impairing the College's output.

The College program was plagued throughout the interwar years with persistent problems of data acquisition. The holdings in the National Archives (Record Groups 24 and 80, particularly) and the Naval War College Archives (Record Group 2) confirm this situation.

While information reached the student and staff officers in a variety of forms from widely diffused sources, successive College presidents regularly dispatched requests to appropriate Department activities for information vital to the program but presently unavailable at the College. While the latter condition was frequently encouraged by breakdowns in the Department distribution system, it was also intensified by the inability of undermanned intelligence agencies to collect and process this information as well as by delays in publicizing the rapid scientific and technological changes.

An early indication of the impact of insufficient data on College output appeared in 1922. At that time the staff completed a study of "the best general plan of battle to use in event of war between the UNITED STATES and GREAT BRITAIN." The study compared "the fighting strengths in battle of the surface craft of the British and the United States Battle Fleets as they will be during the next few years if the terms of the Treaty Limiting Naval Armaments are carried out."⁴⁸

Admiral Sims pointed out that the study indicated a superiority of British battleships over their American counterparts and the resultant danger to national security. He urged the Department to be aware of the distortion inherent in parity and to take measures to ameliorate the differences. By so doing certain defeat could be avoided in case of British-American battle confrontation. He added pertinently that "if this study is not sound it is hoped that the facilities of the technical Bureaus will be utilized to point out its error in order that the College may avoid developing wrong principles."⁴⁹

The Chief of Naval Operations inquired of the Bureau of Ordnance regarding the conclusions of the

⁴⁸Sims to Secretary of Navy, 12 October 1922, NA-RG 80, Box 31.

⁴⁹Ibid.

College's study. Interestingly, the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance made two replies on the same day to the Chief of Naval Operations concerning the same subject. The Naval War College did not receive a copy of either the formal reply to Operations or of the memorandum. In the former Ordnance noted that in these comments, "the War College has submitted nothing heretofore unknown in the Department which has had the matter under consideration for at least two years . . . " Furthermore, political and economic conditions (absent from the College study) were considered vital to any assessment of fighting strengths. More specifically, it was noted that "War College data is (sic) based upon the actual elevation of turret guns but does not take into account additional elevations of five degrees due to roll . . . "50

The Bureau of Ordnance memorandum to the Chief of Naval Operations, on the other hand, revealed the general problems of obtaining necessary support for College studies as well as reflecting aspects of bureau attitudes toward the College. While Ordnance indicated that a direct reply had already been made to the Chief of Naval Operations "for his decision as to

⁵⁰Chief, Bureau of Ordnance to Chief of Naval Operations, 15 November 1922, ibid.

how much of the details is to be furnished the War College," it was noted further that "at the present time the War College has only partial facts and, of course, cannot be in a position to draw proper conclusions. If any of the details are to be furnished the War College, it is suggested that they go via officer messenger direct to the President and that information be furnished as to the Department's intention in the way of corrective measures. . . ." ⁵¹

In essence, however, the problem of assuring existence of an adequate data base at the College constituted an ongoing problem that virtually defied solution during the interwar period. ⁵²

⁵¹Chief, Bureau of Ordnance to Chief of Naval Operations, 15 November 1922, ibid.

⁵²No resolution of the problem had been achieved by 1925 when another staff study was made on "Fleet Strength Comparison of BLUE-RED and BLUE-ORANGE." Captain Bakenhus, who directed this study, declared that "every effort has been made to have the tabulations and results correct in accordance with the data at the War College." While Bakenhus noted that the study updated War College information on these fleets another important benefit of the comparative study was its identification of "data which is not available in the War College files nor obtainable at the present time from the Navy Department." Worthy of note was his citation that the College lacked fire effect tables on a wide number of guns which, in the case of the Japanese fleet, made "a total of 907 guns of ORANGE on which no data are available."

The impact of these data deficiencies on war gaming and maneuver rules became substantial when it involved "deck penetration and side penetration range limits as well as percentage of hits." As a result, Bakenhus believed that "under the circumstances it

Throughout the interwar period Naval War College publications and special studies were distributed to cognizant bureaus in Washington for comment. This practice represented a two-way street which, in addition to providing current information also afforded an opportunity to appraise the work of the College. For example, the comments of the Director of Naval Communications on a request from the College

seems advisable to postpone the fighting strength comparisons of BLUE-ORANGE until more data, which is now being sought by the War College, is secured." Captain R. E. Bakenhus to Chief of Staff, Naval War College, "Fleet-Strength Comparisons: BLUE-RED and BLUE-ORANGE," 30 November 1925, NA-RG 80, Box 31.

Captain Bakenhus' comments led Admiral Pratt to seek more information on British and Japanese naval guns from the Office of Naval Intelligence. Pratt noted that "more complete and reliable information regarding the characteristics of certain foreign naval guns is desired for the purposes of tactical studies." He listed as essential information such aspects as caliber, length in caliber, weight of projectile, muzzle velocity, and maximum elevation as mounted in each class of ship. Other information he considered "useful but not essential" included character of fuses, rate of fire, fire control, and special ammunition. In the latter categories, Pratt advised that "in the absence of definite information we can usually make a good enough estimate." Pratt to Office of Naval Intelligence, 14 December 1925, ibid.

Other deficiencies at a later date led Pratt to ask the Chief of Naval Operations to inquire of the Director of Naval Communications about rules on communications and radio compasses as well as "communications and any new rules desirable regarding high frequency radio." Pratt to Chief of Naval Operations, 8 March 1927, ibid.

for the latest input on radio compasses, high frequency tables, and other communications developments are relevant. While the Director believed inclusion of this information made war gaming more realistic, he added gratuitously that "officers go to the War College frequently having no direct communications work and the impression he (sic) receives from reading and studying the publications should be correct impressions, especially is it important that he (sic) should not form exaggerated ideas of the capabilities of communications."⁵³

The Director lauded the College's effort to maintain an up-to-date data base, noting that in the past the only emphasis there has been "related to distances and time required to send messages or signals." He recommended specifically that "for each operation order written by students at the War College there also be required complete communications instructions such as must accompany similar operations orders in the FLEET . . . (this) will result in more consideration being given in tactical operations to the limitations of communications." The latter condition required that the student officers be impressed with "the limitations on communications imposed by space, organization, and

⁵³Director of Naval Communications to Pratt, 28 May 1926, ibid.

personnel." Graduates of the Naval War College, bound for Fleet assignments, were pictured as overlooking these limitations and "inclined to over-rate possibilities in their plans and over-reach practical attainments."⁵⁴

Not only was current input essential to the quality of the College work, but its output must be widely distributed. In this way, the role of the College in assisting Navy preparedness would be most effective. Of course, there were the influences of the Correspondence Course as well as the accomplishments of the College graduates. Yet it remained fundamentally necessary that the College product, regardless of form, permeate the naval establishment. A variety of measures were employed to achieve this objective.

With the conclusion of the 1919-1920 academic year, Admiral Sims undertook to conform to an earlier request from the Chief of Naval Operations that his office be furnished "results of all games, chart maneuvers, lectures . . . " The Chief of Naval Operations noted that the War Plans section of his office would welcome this information in developing the Department's war plans. Furthermore, he wanted cooperation

⁵⁴Ibid.

between the two activities to be as close as possible.⁵⁵ This exchange continued throughout the interwar period although no assessment was uncovered which revealed the impact of the College output on Department war planning.

In the early post war years the graduating officers were also required to submit a personal estimate of the BLUE-ORANGE situation. This product, a distillation of a year's study, contained the general reactions perceivable in the Policy theses. The comments reflected the convictions of officers moving to higher commands and who, in the Second World War, would direct American naval might. There was little doubt in their minds that Japan constituted the most probable adversary and that the naval role would be pivotal in the outcome of any such conflict.

Despite the intensive effort of the College administration to develop and diversify distribution of its output there were repeated breakdowns in the dissemination process. As late as 1928, the Bureau of Navigation requested the College to regularly forward "copies of the curriculum for the academic year, all pamphlets and data used in connection therewith, as well as an outline of the lecture course and copies of the

⁵⁵Chief of Naval Operations to Sims, 3 May 1919, NA-RG 80, Box 501.

lectures as they are presented."⁵⁶

With the data input admittedly incomplete, the end product (or output) could not avoid deficiencies. Therefore, assuring that its product was distributed thoroughly remained a continuous problem. Despite these impediments, the successive College administrations worked diligently to assure that "the word" was passed.

12

Throughout the 1920 decade the Navy education and training effort for general line officers followed the guidelines enunciated by the Knox board. This study had placed the Naval War College program in the upper levels of naval education and training for line officers. The College adhered to the recommendations of the board in structuring its program. However, little effort was made during the decade to analyze thoroughly the effectiveness of the College program. While the College program had been considered briefly during the meeting called in 1922 by Assistant Secretary of Navy Theodore Roosevelt (from which emerged approval for a junior class), the principal program evaluation of this period was prepared by Captain J. K. Taussig

⁵⁶Chief, Bureau of Navigation to Pringle, 16 July 1928, NA-RG 24, Box 572.

of the College staff and was made at the direction of the Bureau of Navigation.⁵⁷

In 1928 the Bureau of Navigation appointed a board (consisting of Captain J. K. Taussig of the Naval War College, Captain Wilber R. Van Auken of the Bureau of Navigation, and Captain John C. Hilliard of the Naval Postgraduate School) to examine the Navy's higher education programs, particularly at the College and the Postgraduate School. Hopefully, the study would result in the elimination of duplicate work at the two institutions as well as coordinate their activities; would suggest procedures to improve the general education of the Navy line officers, and would develop recommendations on their education and training.⁵⁸

During the next several months, the board held many meetings, visited both institutions, and consulted with the institutions' administrative and academic staffs. Based on its deliberations, the board concluded that the Naval War College was generally

⁵⁷The initial impetus for the study came from Admiral Pringle. Pringle to Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, 7 January 1928, NWCA-RG 2.

⁵⁸Bureau of Navigation to Captain J. K. Taussig, 28 February 1928, ibid.

fulfilling the objectives proposed some ten years earlier by the Knox board.⁵⁹

The Knox board had earlier submitted specific eligibility standards for assignment to the Naval War College courses. In the intervening years, the Taussig study found that (with respect to the Junior course) many student officers had less than the recommended ten years of commissioned service; that lieutenants outnumbered lieutenant commanders (contrary to recommendations), and that a similar distortion existed in the Senior course where the number of commanders exceeded those of captains. Both developments were explainable, the board reported, since heavy enrollment of captains in earlier Senior courses had reduced the number now available and resort had to be made to commanders to maintain authorized enrollment levels. Hopefully, the condition would stabilize in future and the number of captains and commanders would equalize. Measures to achieve this end were promulgated in the study.⁶⁰

The Taussig board also cited the existing duplication in the College's Senior and Junior courses.

⁵⁹Captain Joseph K. Taussig to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 19 February 1929, ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

This condition resulted from "there being no eligibility rules, other than rank, for officers who attend the Senior War College course, the large majority of them have not the necessary fundamental background for solving complex problems which are required in the training for higher command." As a result, much of the material in the Senior course had to be repeated for officers who had not had the Junior course. No improvement was seen in this situation until all Senior course student officers had an opportunity to enroll initially in the Junior course. The board further believed any modifications necessary in the Naval War College course should be left to the discretion of the College president. On the other hand, earlier duplication noted by the board between the Junior course and studies at the Naval Postgraduate School had been eliminated while the board's study was underway.⁶¹

To facilitate the progressive education of general line officers, the Taussig board recommended that the Navy not depend upon the Naval Academy experience for the totality of the officer's education needs. Rather the need for further instruction at recurring periods and at intervals between periods of practical

⁶¹Ibid.

experience should be recognized and fulfilled. As a result Captain Taussig and his associates recommended that "the practice of having some officers taking the General Line Course and the Junior War College courses in successive years be discontinued." Here again the board recognized that the fluctuating needs of the naval service, uncontrollable and unforeseeable, might intervene.⁶²

The board further noted that there were many captains and commanders who had completed the War College course prior to the First World War and were now deprived of the opportunity to update this experience. Using this condition as a springboard, the board urged that an advanced class be established at the Naval War College with the needs of these officers in mind. The board also encouraged wider use of the Naval War College Correspondence Course, particularly as a means of preparing officers who had not previously completed the Junior course but who had been selected for the Senior course. In its final observation, the board underscored the desirability of making similar regular evaluations of the Navy's higher education program.⁶³

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

The Chief of the Bureau of Navigation approved the board's recommendations, subject to the following considerations:

(a) that, at the present time, the difficulty of usefully employing on shore duty for a period of only one year the large numbers of officers annually completing the General Line Course and the Junior War College course renders impractical the carrying out of the recommendations of the Board that "the practice of having some officers take the General Line Course and the Junior War College course in successive years be discontinued." (b) that on account of the fact that during the year 1929 there are many more Captains due for sea duty than due for shore duty it is impracticable to establish the Naval War College Advanced Course immediately.⁶⁴

So ended the official Department evaluation of the Naval War College program for the 1920's.

13

When diplomats and naval experts assembled in London in 1930 to revitalize the arms limitations program, the Naval War College had settled into an organizational routine that would remain largely undisturbed until the late 1930's. In essence, the College had been reactivated, and the institutional structure, study program, and operating routine had been relatively standardized.

⁶⁴Ibid.

The main thrust of the College program as the 1920 decade drew to a close continued to center on two major premises: (1) a growing concern for Japanese political, economic and military development; and (2) an increasing preoccupation with tactical studies. The rise of Japanese power in the Orient had caused considerable soul-searching on the part of American political and military leaders. Charged with the responsibilities of protecting America's increasingly far-flung interests, the Navy lacked men, vessels, and bases to assure such accomplishments. Furthermore a continued national reluctance to join the League of Nations or to participate vigorously in any other peace-seeking body directed Navy planning away from an allied basis toward highly unlikely unilateral actions. Notwithstanding, the College community set about to examine new scientific and technological developments, to play many war games (some new, many old), and to consider ad infinitum the Japanese military threat and the best means to thwart it and--if need be--to destroy it.

PRESIDENTS OF THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
1930-1942



Rear Admiral Harris Laning, USN
1930-1933



Rear Admiral Luke McNamee, USN
1933-1934



Rear Admiral C. P. Snyder, USN
1937-1939



Rear Admiral E. C. Kalbfus, USN
1934-1936; 1939-1942

CHAPTER VII

THE COLLEGE DOLDRUMS PERSIST: 1930-1934

Nineteen thirty dawned in an atmosphere of gloom and uncertainty. Few persons suspected that the turmoil created by militant nationalism and a pervading economic depression would culminate, at the decade's end, in a world-wide armed conflict of unparalleled destruction. Despite earlier political efforts to foster disarmament and to eliminate war as instrument of national policy, there were abundant signs as the 1930's unfolded that real progress toward peace had been minimal. Little had been accomplished to ameliorate latent international distrust, suspicion, and greed. Increasingly, the people turned to central governments or charismatic leaders who promised alleviation of the ills besetting mankind.

The 1930 decade had hardly begun when the peaceful aspirations of the previous decade were seriously threatened by the Japanese, German and Italian governments. In 1931, the Japanese seized upon an incident

on the South Manchurian railway as a pretext for a full-scale invasion of Manchuria. Since the major world powers refused to halt the Japanese armies, the entire province was overrun. One year later, a puppet state (Manchukuo) was established. Within a few months, Japanese expansion continued into the Shanghai area. These two major actions were flagrant violations of the Kellogg-Briand treaty as well as the earlier Nine-Power Treaty.

The United States government denounced this aggression and issued a "non-recognition" policy covering Japan's new territorial acquisitions. Yet Japanese designs could only be thwarted by war. The American public was resolved not to repeat the bitter experiences of the First World War. The other major powers were even more inactive in their opposition.

Additional ominous rumblings emanated from Germany where internal affairs became increasingly unstable, thereby paving the way for a Hitler takeover in 1933. He began quickly to rebuild the German military machine in direct violation of the Versailles treaty terms. Again, the major powers restricted their opposition to varying degrees of rhetoric.

The prevailing political agitation, buttressed by military force, was bound to influence existing

military agreements, particularly those relating to arms limitations. The major powers sought vainly to curtail the military bases of the emerging nationalism. At the London conference in 1930 the assembled representatives engaged in protracted discussions before extending restrictions on naval construction. However, the attitude of Japanese political and military leaders boded ill for future extensions.

To cap the rising social instability, the economic depression intensified as the decade unfolded. This condition produced an aura of helplessness and hopelessness which aided the rise of reformers, regardless of stripe.

The United States also felt the impact of the deteriorating political and economic order. Although President Hoover optimistically predicted that the depression would be brief and that the earlier prosperity would return soon, he was reluctant to utilize federal government resources to hasten recovery. He preferred personal exhortation and voluntary state and municipal action to stem the recession and to reduce suffering.

By 1930 Hoover's doctrinaire adherence to purely voluntary techniques for combatting the depression had eroded his public support. In the congressional

elections of that year, the Republic party suffered substantial losses. Hoover slowly modified his political philosophy and program to combat the depression. However, the damage had been done. He was defeated soundly in the 1932 presidential contest by Franklin D. Roosevelt. In this campaign, a major issue was the depressed economy and the causes thereof. Inherent in the rhetoric was the issue of the role of central government in combatting economic instability. Roosevelt insisted that relations between business and government must take a new tack, while Hoover emphasized "rugged individualism" as a philosophy that had served the country well in the past and continued valid in the present.

In his campaign talks and inaugural address Roosevelt underscored the difficulties confronting his administration. To combat the economic stagnation he would engage in considerable economic experimentation, particularly during his first term in office. Thereafter, his efforts moved increasingly to foreign affairs.

Although economic recovery remained an ongoing concern, President Roosevelt's program contained no fundamental economic theory. Yet it differed essentially from Hooverian attempts to effect recovery. Beginning with limited reforms in a few areas, Roosevelt

responded to mounting public pressure by proposing large-scale social reforms wrapped in an adventure-some spirit. The entire economy would be affected as the thrust of Roosevelt's administration moved from recovery to reform. By 1934 New Deal legislative battles had divided the Congress into clearly identifiable pro-and anti-Roosevelt forces.

Nineteen thirty found the Navy at the nadir of its postwar eclipse. The generous appropriations of 1916 had been followed, in the postwar years, by a decade of budget reductions and naval arms limitation agreements. In 1932 the United States had less than 150 active warships of all classes and a personnel strength under 80,000. None of the three Republican presidents (Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover) in the 1920's had the slightest enthusiasm for a strong navy. As the depression worsened, President Hoover had urged a further reduction in government operating costs--and the military and naval services contracted accordingly.

The London Naval Conference in 1930 marked the swan song of any hope for a peaceful postwar world. Although capital ship construction had been postponed for five additional years, the intransigent attitudes of the participants gave little hope for an extension beyond that date. Another disarmament conference, held

in Geneva in 1932, was equally unsuccessful. Over a year was consumed in profitless discussion before the conference disintegrated.

Early in 1933 the Navy was showing the effects of the postwar contraction. Nearly all of its destroyers and submarines were overage and generally inferior to similar types in the British, French and Japanese navies. Although the Navy was relatively strong in battleships and large cruisers, less than half of the authorized strength in aircraft carriers had been completed. Naval auxiliaries were overage and under-utilized, leading to substandard performance; personnel shortages existed in most ratings, drastically impairing the ability to maintain a full complement of ship's company. Only naval aviation continued to develop its capability through advances in aircraft types and carrier utilization. Fortuitously, upon reaching the postwar nadir, the Navy encountered two staunch friends and supporters, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Secretary of the Navy Claude A. Swanson.

The new president quickly demonstrated his desire to expand and strengthen the Navy. In mid-June, 1933, he announced the allocation of \$238,000,000 of National Industrial Recovery Act funds to increase naval strength and, simultaneously, to provide employment

to shipyard workers and their suppliers. Roosevelt's action inaugurated a new era for the Navy and the expenditures would trickle down eventually to the Naval War College where authority was received to undertake the long sought expansion of the physical facilities.

2

In the midst of world-wide social convulsions, the Naval War College welcomed its new president--a former student officer and staff member--Rear Admiral Harris Laning. The new president was in the general mold of his predecessors: enamored of the College and its mission, convinced of its value to the Navy, and desirous of expanding its influence throughout the naval service. Admiral Laning's career pattern revealed a steady progression to major command responsibilities.¹ His selection to head the College

¹Admiral Harris Laning, a native of Petersburg, Illinois, was fifty-seven years of age when he returned to Newport in June, 1930. A Naval Academy graduate, class of 1895, his subsequent diversified naval service included assignment as athletic head at the Naval Academy (1910) and membership on the United States rifle team in the 1912 Olympic games. He captained this team and led it to a gold medal award. Although duty during the First World War had been centered on personnel matters in the Bureau of Navigation, his services had been considered sufficiently distinguished to merit the Navy Cross. Subsequently he was a student and staff officer at the Naval War College. He

represented the first postwar variation from the steady line of naval officers with a surfeit of sea experience. However, his selection proved judicious since he would work zealously to consolidate and to stabilize College operations, to avoid service controversy while seeking curriculum expansion and probing existing programmatic boundaries.

Admiral Laning was an admirer of Admiral Sims and the spirit of reform which the latter personified. At the time of the dispute between Secretary of Navy Daniels and Sims, Laning wrote to Sims, pledged his support, and offered to testify in Sims' behalf. When presented, his testimony "gave considerable support to Sims' charges." At a later date Laning mused that while the "controversy turned out to be something of a 'dud' . . . (he) became persona non grata with many high officers that (sic) had been retained at the Navy Department under the new administration."² This handicap did not appear to mar Laning's

returned to the Naval War College from Commander, Battleship Division Two, Scouting Fleet, Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22.

See also Admiral Harris Laning, Unpublished autobiography, "An Admiral's Yarn," (NP, nd)., Ms. Doc. 15, NWCNHC, (hereafter cited as Admiral's Yarn). For a distillation of this autobiography, see Gerald E. Wheeler, "The War College Years of Admiral Harris Laning, U.S. Navy," NWC Review XXI (March, 1969), pp. 69-87.

²Laning, Admiral's Yarn, pp. 286-287.

career, however, since he achieved every promotion in rank normally associated with a successful career.

In his opening remarks to the new classes assembled in July, 1930, Admiral Laning counseled the student officers that the College program was not a repetition of their Academy experience. Certainly, it bore "little resemblance to the ordinary institution of learning." The student officers could expect to study "only enough to learn the sound principles on which successful warfare is based," since the major thrust of their studies would be toward "the practical application of the principles of war." At the conclusion of their studies, the student officers should know "how best to use our standardized naval team should war come." Laning was particularly interested that the student officers recognize that "it isn't so much what an officer gets in the War College course that counts as what he does afterward with what he gets."³ The experiences of the Second World War would demonstrate most effectively what the College graduates of the interwar period did with what they got.

³Laning, Opening Address, 2 July 1930, NWCA-RG 16. The Senior Class which Laning addressed at this time was headed by Rear Admiral Arthur J. Hepburn (who was actually senior to Admiral Laning) while the Junior Class included Lieutenant Commander Richard L. Conolly (President, Naval War College, 1950-1953), and Lieutenants George C. Dyer, Ernest H. von Heimburg, and James L. Holloway, Jr., (who also served as Laning's Aide), Naval War College, Register of Officers, pp. 41-42.

As with his predecessors, Admiral Laning was faced with the task of directing the College program in an effective implementation of naval policy. The fundamental naval policy existing in the 1930's had changed little since its initial postwar revision.⁴ The original premise "to maintain the Navy in sufficient strength to support the national policies and commerce, and to guard the continental and overseas possessions of the United States" continued in effect. Without a violent political upheaval, continuation of this commitment was a foregone conclusion. Therefore, the twin objectives of the Navy's basic personnel policy "to maintain the personnel at the highest standard and in sufficient numbers to meet the requirements of naval policies" and "to develop and coordinate systematic courses of instruction and training for officers, petty officers, and enlisted men" similarly remained unaltered.

Throughout the decade, the Secretary of Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations periodically re-examined the basic policy and its components. In the process they solicited the bureau chiefs and major commands

⁴Navy Department, Annual Reports--1933, pp. 34-35.

concerning suggested changes, incorporating the recommendations when revisions were issued. The policy phraseology remained sufficiently broad, however, to encompass political, military and naval developments.

The College mission likewise remained unmodified. It continued the usual emphasis on training for higher command although presidential commitment frequently encouraged concentration on the tactical aspects of higher command to the neglect of strategic considerations. The growing use of the war game board drained study time away from wider strategic concepts, reducing the strategic and tactical studies to those associated with "the naval battle of the future." The totality of strategic considerations--involving a blend of political, economic and social factors--received only surface treatment.

The gradual diversion of the College curriculum into varied considerations of "the naval battle of the future" as well as the reduced influence on and contribution to the war planning function increasingly removed the College from a vital voice in Department operations. More and more the thrust of the College program became narrowly conceived despite rhetoric to the contrary and an attempt (through establishment of

the advanced course) to retain involvement in the broad concept of strategic and tactical planning rather than the restricted, specialized seagoing version.

The College's waning influence perhaps encouraged the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation to approach the Chief of Naval Operations early in the 1930 decade with a proposal "to perfect a logical and well-rounded system of professional education for naval officers of the Line." Implying imperfections in the present arrangement and wishing to return cognizance over the College to the Bureau of Navigation, the latter voiced as its principal concern the avoidance of subject matter duplication and the improvement of coordinated effort. The Bureau noted that, under the present organizational alignment, "questions regarding its (the College) curriculum, capacity for student officers, etc., are not directly referred to the Bureau of Navigation." This condition existed notwithstanding the fact the Bureau administered the funds for the upkeep and operations of the College--which was described as "primarily a technical school for the training and education of Line officers."⁵

⁵Bureau of Navigation to Chief of Naval Operations, 6 August 1932, NA-RG 24, Box 572.

The Bureau of Navigation then recommended that the dual responsibility of the Naval War College be changed to place it solely under the Bureau "in the same manner as are now the Naval Academy, the Postgraduate School, and other individual Line officer instruction." Navigation believed that if this approval was forthcoming, it would then "consider that questions of policy with respect to the War College and the curriculum of the College are subject to the approval of the Chief of Naval Operations in the same manner that similar questions with respect to postgraduate training are referred to the technical bureaus concerned. This should not operate to deter the Office of Naval Operations from dealing directly with the College in matters pertaining to technical studies."⁶

As a result of further deliberations held on this proposal, jurisdiction over the Naval War College was returned to the Bureau of Navigation in October, 1934. In later years, an unsuccessful attempt was made to return the College to the jurisdiction of the Chief of Naval Operations.⁷

⁶Ibid.

⁷Pye to Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations, 24 September 1945, NWCA-RG 2. At this time, Admiral W. S. Pye, President, Naval War

During the first year of his presidency Admiral Laning made no changes in the organizational structure inherited from his predecessor, Admiral Pringle. The College had undergone two organizational realignments in the past four years and it appeared judicious to have matters rest before initiating additional modifications--if warrantable in time. Consequently the two-department setup (Operations and Intelligence), plus

College, sought to initiate action which would return the College operations to the cognizance of the Chief of Naval Operations. He believed that such a move would centralize control more effectively and would reduce the tendency of the bureau chiefs to meddle in the formulation of the College curriculum.

Pye also recommended that the College president be returned to General Board membership and that the College be inspected annually by a board consisting of the Chief of Naval Operations, Chief of Naval Personnel (successor organization to the Bureau of Navigation), and Commanders-in-Chief, Atlantic and Pacific fleets.

Of the 1934 jurisdiction shift Pye noted "that there is nothing to indicate the reason for this change, nor is there any record of when the President of the War College ceased to be a member of the General Board, though it is presumed it was at this time." (Note: information developed during this research indicates the shift most likely occurred at the time the board was reorganized in 1932 and its ex-officio members were dropped. Navy Department, Navy Regulations, Change No. 15, 10 March 1932).

the Correspondence Unit, Secretariat, and existing support activities were retained intact.⁸

In line with past practice, the staff officers directing the course work consisted of officers with considerable fleet experience. These officers, who at the time generally lacked college degrees, had completed (in addition to the sea experience) one or both of the College courses.⁹ The professional staff was not expected to serve as "teachers" since the College program was structured toward mutual contributions to the learning situation from staff and student officers.

Admiral Laning faced the usual administrative tasks of maintaining a competent administrative and academic staff while seeking to assure financial support sufficient to protect the integrity of the curriculum and to expand present physical facilities.

⁸Within the Operations department, Captain Stephen C. Rowan took over with Commander H. K. Hewitt, Colonel Presley M. Rixey, Jr., USMC, and LtC. Walter Krueger in support. Commander Fred R. Rogers continued to direct the Intelligence department. No change occurred in the Secretariat where Commander J. T. G. Stapler continued. Captain Benjamin Dutton, Jr., and a staff of five officers (including Commander A. G. Kirk) provided direction to Senior Class members. Captain William A. Glassford replaced Captain W. N. Vernou as Junior Class advisor. Naval War College, Outline History, p. 283.

⁹Later in the decade, graduates of the Naval Academy were retroactively granted bachelor's degrees. See pp. 258-259.

While the number of officer personnel had stabilized somewhat, thereby aiding staff planning, available funds would increase fortuitously during Laning's presidency to the point where additional construction could be undertaken.

The composition of the College's professional staff at any given time resulted from a mix of hold-over personnel and newcomers (usually designated by the president from officers he preferred and who were available). During his three years at the College, Laning's professional staff experienced only normal turnover.

The civilian academic assistants, particularly Professors Wilson and Goodrich, continued to provide valuable support in the areas of international law and political science. Since these men constituted the principal civilian academic staff members, staff maintenance problems (other than guest lecturers) lacked urgency.¹⁰

¹⁰At this time, Professor Wilson was approaching his thirtieth year of service to the College. Admiral Laning believed a search should begin for Wilson's successor and that his salary should reflect the expansion in Wilson's duties over the years. Laning noted that the international law classes had grown annually in the postwar period and that Wilson had to shift his earlier emphasis on lectures to a combination of lectures, problems, and discussions. In addition, he reviewed all the solutions submitted by the student

Inadequate physical facilities continued to plague the College administration. Each year brought further deterioration to structures, materials, and equipment--some of which had been in use for over thirty-five years. In 1930 the problem of physical facilities reached the top of the priority list. At that time, the College staff approximated twenty-two officers and eighty-two students. The space available had remained virtually constant since original construction in 1892 (with the exception of a small wing added to the library in 1903). The existing crampedness becomes obvious when one recalls that the total original occupancy in the War College building numbered five officers and eighteen student officers.

Throughout the 1920's the various presidents of the College had recommended that the College's physical facilities should be expanded to accommodate the increased enrollment. No action followed. At the Department level the various Secretaries faced persistent pressures to reduce the size of the fleet and to constrict its supporting shore establishment. Maintenance

officers as well as directing compilation of the College's well-known "blue book" of international law. Lanning to Chief of Naval Operations, 7 February 1931, NA-RG 80, Box 3158.

of existing force levels consumed available funds. Little remained for other activities. Indeed, consolidation rather than expansion was the dominant theme. But in time the squeaking wheel would receive its drop of oil and the earlier clamor of College presidents would pay off. Yet a few more pleas would be necessary.

Shortly after assuming the College presidency, Admiral Laning joined the ranks of his predecessors in urging that the College physical facilities be expanded and modernized. Writing to the Chief of Naval Operations, Laning reiterated the unsatisfactory physical facilities and offered additional arguments for Department use in its overtures to Congress. Laning chose to build his case around the College's "applicatory method" of instruction and the war gaming exercises. The instructional methodology required that solutions be played in detail and in miniature, thereby representing a tremendous saving over the use of actual vessels. Since the College instituted war gaming in the 1890's, the nature of naval warfare had changed substantially. Therefore, Laning noted, additional space was necessary to represent the capabilities of modern navies if the games were to be truly replicative.¹¹

¹¹Laning to Chief of Naval Operations, 14 November 1930, NA-RG 24, Box 572.

Laning also cited that the need for "adequate housing for its personnel" was not the only pressing need for physical facilities at the College. For example, the misnomered lecture hall was totally unsatisfactory. Laning suggested strongly that learning was substantially impeded by the crowded conditions in the hall, particularly when analyses of war game solutions were underway.¹²

Admiral Laning welcomed the \$400,000 expenditure tentatively proposed in the 1932 Naval Appropriations Bill to meet College construction needs. Much could be accomplished, he believed, "by adding to the present building and partly by making minor alterations inside it." His proposed alterations would give "the College seventeen additional rooms, which will be available for staff and students, and for the clerical force now housed in the library wing." The increased room space would also permit the addition of six staff and twenty-eight student officers, facilitate library, archival, and research work, and give the library vital space for its books "many of which are not now readily available because of having to be stowed in boxes in the basement . . . "¹³

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

The Chief of the Bureau of Navigation supported Laning's views, adding specifics in his forwarding endorsement which he believed essential to the proposal. The need for a large lecture hall must be met, he noted, since "the present one was poorly adapted for the purpose, its depth being so shallow and the room so small that it is difficult for officers who are forced to sit at the far sides of the room to obtain a good view of the diagram or slides used to illustrate a (war gaming) problem." Being unable to see clearly and to follow the moves under discussion, "they naturally lose interest."¹⁴

Notwithstanding the opinion of the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation that "the importance of the Naval War College to the Navy and the country cannot be overestimated," Laning's efforts were not immediately successful. Yet the essentiality of the construction had received further confirmation. The Chief of the Bureau of Navigation's belief that the construction needs at the College was "one of the most important projects under its cognizance for the benefit of the naval service" would eventually tip the scales in favor of the College's requests. The time was not far

¹⁴Chief of Bureau of Navigation to Chief of Naval Operations, 9 December 1930, ibid.

distant when such pleadings would be realized and Pringle Hall would be forthcoming.

President Roosevelt's concern for naval expansion (and the employment it would create) was instrumental in providing almost \$400,000 for new construction and renovation work at the College. Shortly before Laning departed the presidency, construction of the new building extension began.¹⁵

6

The College program for the academic year 1930-1931 contained many familiar assignments as well as the traditional concern for the growing Japanese intransigence.¹⁶ The course work for the Senior Class

¹⁵Newport Daily News, March 1, 1933. At the ground-breaking ceremonies, Admiral Laning turned over the traditional first shovel.

¹⁶The Naval War College emphasis on a possible confrontation with the Japanese was based on a set of circumstances succinctly stated by Gerald E. Wheeler, Prelude to Pearl Harbor: The Navy and the Far East, 1921-1931, (Columbia, Mo., 1963), p. 25. Professor Wheeler observes that the United States "was definitely interested in the Open Door and the territorial integrity of China, and is committed to keeping the Philippines. Yet force was not to be applied in support of these Far Eastern commitments . . . While the United States would undoubtedly have acted to defend the Philippines from any direct aggressions, the response would of necessity have been ineffective. The Asiatic Fleet was entirely too weak to do much more than show the flag and meet small-scale crises in Far East waters." Wheeler sees the United States as essentially dependent on "the Nine-Power Treaty of 1922 to

of 1931, as prepared by the Operations department, treated of the following subjects: Service of Information and Security; demonstrative chart and board maneuver essentials; the functions of command and of Command Organization; a demonstrative operations problem (concerned with instruction in the estimate of the situation and the writing of plans and orders), and a series of strategical and tactical problems (primarily of BLUE-ORANGE orientation), culminating in a joint operations problem.¹⁷

The 1930-1931 Junior Class program consisted of the usual emphasis on tactical work. After the initial organizational meeting, the class settled down to orientation work in tactics. These studies required examination of a range of pertinent publications and operating problems. Hopefully, Junior Class student officers would develop greater knowledge of torpedo fire, smoke screen, and the formations and maneuvers of the battle line. A considerable portion of this

protect its China interest and on the Four-Power "Treaty of 1921 to shield the Philippines." He concludes that it was "a bit ironical that Americans could place such faith in paper defenses for their Far Eastern commitments and at the same time so pointedly ignore that major 'scrap of paper' designed to keep the peace of the world--the Covenant of the League of Nations."

¹⁷ Naval War College, Outline History, pp. 293-298.

orientation phase was also directed to understanding the rules of war gaming, particularly in the use of fire effect tables and scoring of gun and torpedo fire. After this indoctrination the Junior Class members spent most of the balance of the academic year working on a variety of tactical problems involving BLUE-ORANGE forces though RED-BLUE and BLUE-PURPLE (Russia) forces were also considered.¹⁸

During the following academic year, 1931-1932, quite similar material was considered by the Operations department. However, the emphasis varied with the departmental section (strategic or tactical) making the presentation. Some of the general operating problems of the previous year were relocated as in (1) the defense of Luzon against an ORANGE expeditionary force; (2) the battle of Truk; and (3) a BLUE-ORANGE campaign following the establishment of the BLUE fleet in a base in the southern Philippines. Other geographical locations were represented by a BLUE-RED campaign in the Atlantic (with BLUE on the strategic offensive against RED possessions in the western hemisphere and against RED South Atlantic communications), an examination of cruiser warfare in the early months of the

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 299-303.

First World War, and the first stage of a BLUE-ORANGE war (under conditions at considerable variance with subsequent reality).¹⁹

Under the general heading of "Strategic Geographical Areas," the Intelligence departmental staff presented lectures on the following locations: the Guam-Bonin line; the Hawaiian islands; Japan; the Nansei-Formosa islands; the Philippine islands; the Caroline and Marshall islands, and the dominions and possessions of the RED (England) empire in the Atlantic and Caribbean. Other projected geographical studies involving Japan and the Kuriles islands and Alaska and the Aleutian islands were omitted for lack of time and the absence of operational problems covering these specific areas.²⁰

In July, 1931, with the establishment of the Research department, Admiral Laning instituted his only major organizational break from the Pratt-Pringle institutional structure. This department, headed by Captain Wilbur Van Auken (with two assistants), was assigned two principal functions: (1) to maintain complete records of all war games played at the College and from study and analysis of these records to ascertain the salient points and features relating to

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 325-355.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 305-307.

gunfire, torpedo fire, bombing, smoke screens, damage received and inflicted, use of aircraft, material performance, and any other relevant factor; and (2) to prepare studies and replies to all professional requests received at the College.²¹

During the first year of its existence, 1931-1932, the Research departmental staff observed all war games involving the Senior Class, analyzed the salient points of each game, and prepared comments on all solutions submitted on the operations and tactical problems. This information was provided to the College president as well as to addressees on the College standard distribution list. In addition, the departmental staff began a thorough study of major ships of the line; prepared special studies on maneuver rules in connection with fire effect; submarines; destroyers; aircraft, and hit values for bombs and torpedoes. In this effort the department provided valuable support to the academic program.²²

A major effort of the Operations departmental staff during the academic year 1932-1933 consisted of a detailed presentation on the lessons of Allied grand strategy during the First World War. The

²¹Ibid., pp. 369-371.

²²Ibid.

presentation was an integral part of the department's examination of the nature of grand strategy, naval strategy and its role in the war, as well as the military strategy of the war. The staff prepared a number of lectures, with supporting slides, which were presented to both classes meeting as a unit.²³

The grand strategy presentation emphasized several lessons which the federal government should note in preparing for national emergencies which might conceivably require use of armed force: (1) establishment of "an organization for the Supreme Direction of Grand Strategy in the conduct of a war which provides for the coordination of all branches of Grand Strategy;" (2) Formulation of "a mobilization plan for each branch of Grand Strategy;" (3) provision for "the education in and study of grand strategy by all important civil, government, military and naval leaders;" (4) encouragement of "the general study of grand strategy in higher educational institutions;" and (5) recognition that "the selection of all leaders in grand strategy must accomplish a close and sympathetic

²³Naval War College. Department of Operations, "The Grand Strategy of the World War," June, 1933, NA-RG 80, Box 188.

cooperation in the making and execution of plans."²⁴

At this time Admiral Laning was particularly gratified with the progress he noted in student performance in tactical studies. He attributed this development to a new emphasis on "boiled down" tactical ideas which accelerated, broadened and intensified understanding of these concepts. In outlining the current procedure, Laning noted that "we start them out with a verbal picture of 'The Naval Battle,' then give them some papers Coffey (Captain Reuben B. Coffey) has prepared on the tactical handling of the battle line, and the tactical handling of light forces. Other papers on the tactical operation of air forces and submarines are now about ready." In contrast to earlier procedures, Laning now believed that "between all these the students are getting a lot of splendid groundwork in fundamentals, and as a result they are able to avoid a lot of mistakes that heretofore were only brought home by the trial and error method, which method wastes a lot of time and doesn't always take anyhow."²⁵

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Laning to Captain John F. Shafroth, 28 November 1932, NWCA-RG 2.

In May, 1933, Admiral Laning's presidency drew to its conclusion.²⁶ As he prepared to leave "the happiest shore duty" he had ever experienced, Laning was feted by the staff and student officers. Earlier he had spoken separately in his office to the civil service personnel, thanking them for their efficient performance and hoping he "would come back and find them a'l there despite economies."²⁷

Admiral Laning departed Newport before Assistant Secretary of Navy H. L. Roosevelt arrived to address the officer graduates. The occasion was highlighted by the presence of Governor Theodore Green, it marking the first time a Rhode Island governor had attended the ceremonies. Rear Admiral Ernest J. King, who had begun studies with the Class of 1933 but who had been detached subsequently to become Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics upon the death of Admiral Moffett, flew from Washington to receive his diploma.²⁸

²⁶Admiral Laning spent the next three years at sea with the Scouting and Battle forces. During 1936-1937 he served as Commandant, Third Naval District, retiring from all active duty on 1 November 1937. At that time he was appointed Governor of the Naval Home, Philadelphia, Pa., serving in that position until his death, 2 February 1941. Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22.

²⁷Newport Daily News, May 13, 1933.

²⁸Ibid., May 26, 1933.

To succeed Admiral Laning in the College presidency the Navy selected Admiral Luke McNamee, sixty-two years of age and in his thirty-ninth year of naval service. McNamee came to Newport from a top command assignment as Commander, Battle Force. While McNamee was a widely experienced naval officer and a former student and staff member at the College, he realized that his proximity to retirement would tend to thwart any lasting impact he might hope to exert on the College operation. Consequently, after one year at Newport, he would resign from the Navy to accept the twin presidencies of Mackay Radio and Telegraphy Company and the Federal Telegraph Company.²⁹

While Admiral McNamee undertook no modification of the organization structure, he still faced the

²⁹Admiral Luke McNamee was born in Mount Hope, Wisconsin, 4 April 1871. His family subsequently moved to Kansas from where he was appointed to the Naval Academy. Receiving his commission as ensign in 1894, he made a "normal advance through the grades" until he reached his captaincy in 1917--three years after his initial sea command. Attendance and brief staff duty at the Naval War College prior to the First World War was followed by service during the war years in the Pacific, Washington, D.C., and London, England. The postwar years found him again on the staff of the College, followed by assignments as Director of Naval Intelligence, naval attache, and in several major sea commands prior to returning to Newport and the College presidency. Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22.

necessity of assembling his staff. Fortunately this was not a difficult task as the major positions were occupied by staff officers remaining from the previous academic year.³⁰

Ecnomic stringencies intensified as the year progressed and McNamee had to struggle to retain his professional staff membership of twenty-five. The Chief of the Bureau of Navigation had indicated that, in future, the College staff officers would be reduced in number to twenty-two (a move which McNamee branded "unfortunate" since the curtailment in all probabilities would reduce the activities of the Research department).³¹ Despite this ominous threat, however, staff reductions did not materialize during the balance of the decade.

As a basis for his administrative action throughout the academic year, Admiral McNamee reviewed his concept of the College mission. While he believed that the basic mission of the College continued to

³⁰Naval War College, Outline History, pp. 377, 393. Only a few staff changes coincided with Admiral McNamee's arrival. Captain Wilson Brown became Chief of Staff and Captain Reuben B. Coffey assumed direction of the Operations department. Other major department heads--Captain Milton S. Davis (Intelligence) and Captain Wilbur R. Van Auken (Research)--remained unchanged.

³¹McNamee to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 9 January 1934, NWCA-RG 2.

involve preparation for higher command, he provided additional specifics: "to supplement the sea training of officers; increase their knowledge of war, its theory and the application of its principles; raise the standard of individual ability; and promote a common school of thought that will insure coordination of effort."³²

Admiral McNamee continued Laning's earlier attempts to lessen the impact of the depression on his civilian staff by attempting to obtain salary increases and/or seeking restoration of salary checkages resulting from across-the-board salary reductions ordered for civilian personnel. The latter issue surfaced in 1933 with the passage of the Economy Act of that year and continued sporadically for the duration of the decade. Economy Act legislation required an automatic fifteen per cent reduction in the salaries of government employees. For the College administration, it

³²Naval War College, "The Mission and Organization of the U.S. Naval War College," 1 June 1934, NWCA-RG 2. In the achievement of this mission and in accordance with the prevailing College routine, McNamee reiterated that "in order to reduce competition to a minimum, the routine report of fitness for student officers will not include special marks in individual subjects such as Strategy, Tactics, or International Law, nor will marks be assigned for force, leadership, loyalty, attention to duty, presence of mind, endurance. Reports will ordinarily indicate "satisfactory work" except that outstanding ability will be recognized and unsatisfactory work will be indicated where necessary. Marks will be given in: intelligence,

raised the question of the nature of contractual relationships between the College and its civilian academic assistants and lecturers.

At this time when Professor Goodrich received his check to cover services rendered, he questioned the legality of the checkage made on his agreed salary since he did not consider himself a government employee. The other lecturers were similarly docked. It was contended further that designation of these employees as government employees might lead to additional administrative problems since they would become eligible for several fringe benefits not presently conceived under their contracts.

The College lecturers, part-time and occasional, came to Newport from various locations on the eastern seaboard. Contractual sums paid the lecturers varied but the general custom allowed \$100 for lecturers residing outside New England and \$75 for lecturers from the area proximate to Newport. This flat sum included the fee for the lecture, travel allowances, and expenses incidental to the visit to the College. The total appropriation of \$2,000 per annum allotted to the lecture program was considered a vital support to the course work.

judgment, initiative, tact, cooperation, industry, military bearing, neatness and aptitude."

The College sought clarification of this problem from the Judge Advocate General. While admitting that Professor Wilson's status was different from the other civilian lecturers, the College also disclosed the normal contractual process concerning lecturers. The latter were invited to speak at the College and, upon agreement as to details, they submitted a "bid" on a requisition form, inserting the amount agreed upon. No indication was made at any time that the payment would be "checked."³³

In February, 1934, the Comptroller General of the United States determined that Professors Wilson and Goodrich really did not offer their services under a "bid" procedure, thereby disqualifying themselves from exemption to the checkage charge. Wilson and Goodrich were considered to be regular employees since their contracts were entered into without true bids. Competition was non-existent since their services were specifically sought. Hence, under this interpretation, they came within the terms "officer" and "employee" as set out by the act, their salary having been fixed by law prior to 30 March 1933 (the

³³Captain Wilson Brown (Acting) to Judge Advocate General, Navy Department, 28 November 1933, NWCA-RG 2.

date which determined eligibility for checkage). The one-time only basis of the other lecturers (whose contracts actually took the form of a single "bid") eliminated them from consideration as regular employees. As a result, they were entitled to refunds to the amounts checked.³⁴

The checkage difficulty had no effect on military lecturers. They received no stipend as their appearances were considered to be in the line of duty. Other government employees received a lecture stipend but the checkage charge necessitated a re-examination of their status. This development led to the elimination of the stipend payment since they were now considered to be acting within the purview of their regular duties. It was proposed that these speakers, civilian government specialists usually working in the Washington (D.C.) area, be placed on the same travel and expense format as the military personnel.³⁵ However, neither the Navy nor State departments (which provided most of the speakers) possessed funds to

³⁴Comptroller General of the United States to Secretary of Navy, 6 February 1934, NWCA-RG 2.

³⁵McNamee to Bureau of Navigation, 22 December 1933, ibid.

cover this type of expense allocation.³⁶ As a result of this decision, some government lecturers refused to appear without receiving a stipend and the College was forced to develop additional specialists to address the student officers.³⁷

After considerable administrative activity the issue of the contractual status of part-time and one-time personnel was finally resolved.³⁸ It arose periodically for the balance of the interwar period, however, the Judge Advocate General being required to issue additional clarifications of his earlier order (which remained basically unchanged).³⁹

8

During the McNamee presidency the supplications of his predecessors for additional and/or improved physical

³⁶Bureau of Navigation to McNamee, 9 January 1934, ibid.

³⁷Kalbfus to Bureau of Navigation, 18 January 1935, NA-RG 24, Box 572.

³⁸A final complication in the issue involved the disbursing officer at the Newport Naval Training Station who had believed the checkage to be valid in the case of the one-time civilian lecturers and had been supported in his interpretation by the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts. Additional correspondence was necessary in order to obtain release of the amounts deducted. G. M. McAdee to Captain S. A. Taffinder, 2 March 1934, ibid.

³⁹Judge Advocate General to Bureau of Navigation, 3 December 1941, ibid.

facilities were heeded. Earlier, Admiral McNamee had added his plea in a long litany of needed repairs and alterations to the College building.⁴⁰ Shortly thereafter the Chief of Naval Operations informed McNamee that funds (to the amount of \$360,000) had become available under the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932. This act provided \$10,000,000 for naval public works.⁴¹ Construction of the new wing to the War College building was initiated under this grant.

The impending completion of the new addition created the problem of a suitable name selection. The College had sought to name the original War College building for Admiral Luce, founder of the College, and the new addition for Admiral Mahan.⁴² In reply, the Chief of Naval Operations approved the selection of Luce's name but directed that the new wing be named after Admiral Pringle since "it was when he was Chief of Staff that the first steps were taken in regard to the new War College wing and during his

⁴⁰McNamee to Chief of Naval Operations, 2 August 1933, NA-RG 80, Box 3158.

⁴¹Chief of Naval Operations to McNamee, 9 August 1933, ibid.

⁴²McNamee to Chief of Naval Operations, 16 April 1934, ibid.

incumbency as President that the plans of the building were completed and approved." In rejecting dedication of the new wing to Mahan, it was noted that "there is a Mahan at the United States Naval Academy, and in view of the many other ways in which his memory has been honored, there is no impelling reason why the new War College building, with which he had no connection whatever, should be named after that officer."⁴³

9

As the academic year 1933-1934 got underway, Admiral McNamee planned no major changes in course content or curriculum emphasis. The regular concentration on strategy, tactics, and international law continued. In this regard Admiral McNamee was following basic management practices in examining existing conditions and programs before recommending changes. On the other hand, perhaps he was in the process of evaluating outside offers of employment.

The Operations department continued the emphasis of the previous year by dividing equally operations and tactics problems between BLUE-RED and BLUE-ORANGE situations. The traditional consideration of Jutland

⁴³Chief of Naval Operations to Secretary of Navy, 16 April 1934, ibid.

as well as discussion of joint operations and grand strategy were repeated.⁴⁴ The Intelligence department continued to provide support for strategy, tactics, and international law studies, to present staff lectures and arrange for outside lecturers, and to review critically the theses submitted by the Senior and Junior classes. Meanwhile, the Research department concentrated on such diverse topics as the study of bombing accuracy and damage effect (as related to maneuver rules), analysis of torpedo firing methods, analysis of the Senior Class war games, preparation of additional strategic and tactical problems for future classwork, and presentation of the grand strategy of the First World War.⁴⁵

The major curricular event of the academic year was the inauguration of the long-sought Advanced Course. Agitation for establishment of an Advanced Course, virtually continuous since the College's re-activation in 1919, was finally successful during McNamee's single year in the College presidency. Although the course would not actually commence until

⁴⁴ Naval War College, Department of Operations, "Schedule of Presentations and Conferences, 1933-1934," 5 July 1933, NWCA-RG 4.

⁴⁵ Naval War College, Outline History, pp. 395-398.

1 July 1934, the initial pressure for the course had been applied by Admiral Sims and had been re-echoed by his successors. Sims had envisioned an advanced class which would carry analyses beyond the point reached in the Senior course. Also, several study groups concerned with Navy higher education had gone on record as favoring an advanced course. The recommendations of the Pye board in this regard had been supported by the Taussig board almost a decade later. Although the Taussig board had suggested that an advanced course be established for senior officers who had completed the senior course before the First World War, the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation had ruled at that time that the need for captains at sea militated against start of an advanced course.

Writing to the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral McNamee cited General Order 168 of 21 September 1927 which would establish an advanced course at the College to include "the drafting of war plans and advanced phases of naval campaigns." Through this course work student officers would receive "an opportunity to study the conduct of war in its broadest sense . . . a training for high command over and above the training now provided by the War College courses." McNamee noted that all but a few officers now in the grades of junior

rear admiral and captain are graduates of the College's Senior course. The present curtailment of shore activities because of economic considerations should release officers for detail to an advanced course. Furthermore, the completion of current construction at the College would assure adequate facilities to handle the expanded enrollment. In pushing for the advanced course, McNamee was willing to accept a slight decrease in the Senior Class membership.⁴⁶

Admiral McNamee recommended that the Advanced Course begin in July, 1934, the first class to consist of ten senior line officers who were graduates of the Senior course and five of whom would be named by the College president from the present Senior Class. The remaining five officers would be ordered from other stations where they had just served as chief of staff or assistant chief of staff in important afloat commands. Finally, the class should also include one Marine and one Army officer, both of whom should be graduates of the Naval War College, the Army War College, or the

⁴⁶McNamee to the Chief of Naval Operations, 17 July 1933, NWCA-RG 2.

In an earlier period, Admiral Pratt had urged establishment of an advanced class, numbering about five officers and consisting of "graduates of the War College Senior course from the list of admirals and senior captains, the course to consist of a study of War Plans, Policy, Organization, War Areas, Supply, etc. . . ." Pratt to Chief of Naval Operations, 7 February 1927, ibid.

Army Industrial College. While McNamee believed the course should cover one year's duration, he voiced no objection to extending it to two years for officers who would have only one year remaining on their shore rotation.⁴⁷

In preparing his response to this latest request, the Chief of Naval Operations sought the advice of his War Plans Division director in order that there would be no conflict between the work of that division and the College's proposal to resume "the drafting of war plans." The division director recommended establishment of the Advanced Course, particularly since plans for a College of National Defense had failed to materialize. Initiation of the course was seen as compensating, in part, for the marked delay in the preparation of operating plans by the forces afloat. Noteworthy in its relation to the proposed course was his observation that

I doubt the practicability of the relatively small number of officers--ten--being able to give adequate time and study to the political and economic phases of a possible war, and, in addition, acquire more than a general working understanding of the construction of War Plans as finished products. The details are, as you

⁴⁷ McNamee to the Chief of Naval Operations, 17 July 1933, ibid.

know, voluminous. It seems to me, however, that if the officers assigned to this course were to make thorough studies and investigations as to the political factors and influences (and by political I include economic in all its ramifications) and arrive at a conception of what strategy should be followed in the conduct of a war, then the work of the Senior and Junior classes at the War College could take the strategic decisions as a basis for problems that could be played even to, or, through the strategical stages.⁴⁸

Finally, the time was ripe and in August, 1933, the Chief of Naval Operations approved establishment of the Advanced Course, to begin 1 July 1934. However, he added pertinently that "the drafting of war plans referred to in paragraph one of the basic letter (McNamee's of 17 July 1933) is only for the purpose of training and would have no connection with war plans proper which are now prepared in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations."⁴⁹ This comment squelched any hope that the College, through the medium of the Advanced Course, would resume any aspect of the Navy's war planning function.

Later in 1933, Admiral McNamee submitted the College's tentative plan for the newly approved course. In his view, the content should be threefold: national statecraft in peace and in war; concept of a selected

⁴⁸Director (War Plans Division) to Chief of Naval Operations, 21 July 1933, NA-RG 80, Box 3158.

⁴⁹Chief of Naval Operations to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 16 August 1933, NWCA-RG 2.

war condition, and the plans for this war and the indicated naval campaigns and joint operations. McNamee also believed that the obvious evolutionary character of the course and the need to appraise its results were distinct aspects of the first year's work. Therefore, it would be inexpedient "to lay down definite plans beyond the first year." During this initial period McNamee envisioned the Advanced Class as covering the background of a war, advancing into the most practical details of such a war so that they could be tested by the Senior Class in appropriate chart and board maneuvers. While Admiral McNamee saw the course as covering a single year, if the results were incomplete at that time the class could continue its study into a second year with such changes in personnel as dictated by the needs of the Navy.⁵⁰

Admiral McNamee was particularly concerned that the senior officers attending the Advanced Course should be of "such attainments that they will be able to produce results presupposed by the plan." He recognized that "many very efficient naval officers will not be able to perform duties of this character." However, these student officers must combine considerable intellectuality with interest and great willingness to

⁵⁰ McNamee to the Chief of Naval Operations, 2 October 1933, NA-RG 80, Box 188.

make detailed researches and do a great amount of writing. Above all, they must have "judgment and good sense and they should be officers of some standing in the service." McNamee planned to provide the Bureau of Navigation with a list of officers he considered qualified for the course. Of supreme importance, he noted, was the designation of the senior member of the Advanced Class who would work under the personal direction of the College president.⁵¹

The Bureau of Navigation machinery moved to assemble a representative group of officers for the first Advanced Class.⁵² Several early nominees (Rear Admiral E. C. Kalbfus and Captain W. F. Halsey, Jr.) were unavailable. When the class eventually convened in July, 1934, nine naval officers joined an Army colonel and a Marine Corps colonel to constitute a class headed by Rear Admiral William S. Pye.⁵³

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Detailed correspondence on these efforts can be found in Navy Department, Bureau of Navigation General Correspondence, 1925-1940, NA-RG 24, Box 572.

⁵³Admiral William S. Pye fulfilled most satisfactorily the requirements for the senior member of the Advanced Class. He had long been interested in the educational effort of the Navy, had headed the committee in 1919 appointed to study higher education needs in the Navy, and would, in time, serve as president of the Naval War College, 1942-1946.

McNamee's recommendation that several younger officers (then members of the Senior Class and who had "proven their capacity and interest in research work") should be included in the class went generally ignored. A similar fate awaited his wish "that as many as possible of the members of the Advanced Course be assigned for a period of at least two years." The Navy was beginning to experience growing pains arising from increasing ship construction. The availability of senior and junior officers for "education" assignments was decreasing. More officers would be needed on the bridge than in the classroom.

Notwithstanding, Admiral McNamee moved toward allocating space to the incoming Advanced Class. With the completion of the new wing, projected alterations in "the old building" (Luce Hall) would permit the Advanced Class, operating without a fixed schedule, to take over "the lower floor of the Library wing for class and committee work and each officer will have an office in the east wing of the first floor."⁵⁴

⁵⁴Captain Wilson Brown (Chief of Staff) to Rear Admiral E. C. Kalbfus, 21 March 1934, NWCA-RG 2. At this time Kalbfus was in the USS MELVILLE, commanding the Destroyers, Battle Force. An inveterate letter writer, Kalbfus (soon to assume the College presidency) had sought a status report on College operations and projections.

Throughout the period 1930-1934, the College continued its program of staff presentations and formal lectures by visiting speakers. The program continued the diversified offerings in military and academic subjects first noted in the mid-1920's. The lecture program constituted an integral element in the academic program. While not precisely correct, Admiral Laning had noted earlier that the lecture program was confined "to subjects connected entirely with the causes of war and its conduct in the field . . . we devote all our time to what is connected with actual fighting . . . I believe we are getting somewhere with it and are turning out better planners, better war leaders and better strategists and tacticians than ever before."⁵⁵

While such enthusiasm did not correlate directly with the lecture program, Laning had outlined the thrust of the program:

To fit in with what we are doing, we use all of the lecture time to cover certain things not coverable by reading. We have our lectures on policies, especially the present day policies of our own and other countries, and the conflict between them. Then, we have lectures on the happenings in our own and other countries to show the conditions, the state of mind, etc., in the countries. These form the background for the student's

⁵⁵Laning to Commander J. F. Shafroth, 28 November 1932, ibid.

first thesis in which he discusses the conflicting policies of nations and reasons out how the policy at stake in a war influences the general strategy of a war waged in connection with it.

Our next series of lectures have to do with economics, international trade, commerce, etc., arranged in such a way as to bring home to students some idea of how to use economic strangulation in the strategy of war. As you know, it is the Navy's function to bring about such strangulation . . .

Although economic pressure through control of the sea has always been the particular role of a Navy in war, very little has been done in our Navy in the past to perfect ourselves for carrying out that role, we are just beginning now to use it in the strategy of war, and the results are most illuminating . . .

After the lectures spoken of above and of course the lectures in international law, we devote the little remaining lecture time to subjects of general interest and importance. In these, the Gallipoli campaign, the organization of the government for war, international communications, propaganda in peace and war, procurement, etc., are handled . . . From the above you can guess that we are full up on lectures.⁵⁶

At this time the formal lecture program consisted of about thirty annual presentations almost equally divided between military and academic topics. The military subjects were handled by visiting military personnel speaking in a special area of personal experience.⁵⁷

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Naval War College, "Catalog of Lectures and Staff Presentations, 1884 to date," NWCA (no record group). Illustrative of this thrust are the following randomly selected presentations: Rear Admiral Mark L. Bristol, speaking on "A Navy Preservation of Peace,"

An array of other regular military speakers appeared during this period, including Rear Admiral John Halligan, Commander Henry K. Hewitt, LCol. G. L. McEntee, Captain J. C. Hooper, and Commander Ellis M. Zacharias. The latter officer spoke on Japanese matters of which he was particularly knowledgeable. One topic--The Human Element in Naval Strength--was added to the lecture program for 1933-1934 and was presented by the College president. It was during the latter academic year that the new lecture hall was used for the first time on 20 April 1934.

The civilian lecturers treated a spectrum of topics ranging from political affairs through economic developments to international relations. In addition, leadership psychology, foreign affairs, geography, hydrography, finance and related economic matters also received consideration and assessment. Professor L. M.

noted that the Navy is a function of government and not an adjunct of the government" and that the student officers "must know the science of peace as well as war." LCol. Walter Krueger, USA, spoke on two occasions, stressing the expanding role of "joint operations." Captain Dudley W. Knox made regular assessments of "national strategy" which varied little from year to year (national strategy formulation is difficult because of changes in the dominant political party . . . coordination is impeded because of public influence . . . the United States lost at Versailles and the Washington conference . . . the Open Door is a failure).

Goodrich continued his regular presentation of fundamental American foreign policy, its application in the western hemisphere (where it must be improved . . . where ill-will and suspicion must be removed), its role in promotion of United States economic interests, and its role in international peace (the United States must accept its leadership obligations) and national security.

Events of this period brought Soviet Russia into the political limelight. Several speakers discussed developments in that country and the implication for the United States. Japanese activities were handled regularly by Department of State personnel of whom J. A. deHaas was the most warmly received. Professors P. C. Jessup, Bruce C. Hopper, George Alport, Upton Close, C. H. Haring, and David Lawrence also appeared regularly during the early 1930's.

11

The Senior Class theses for the period 1930-1934 reflect no major change in quantity or quality over those submitted in previous years. Whatever changes occurred are most detectable in the area of quantity as the theses became increasingly larger. The qualitative aspects reflect no major change in either strategical or tactical areas considered. Then, too, the

general homogeneity of the student officers, culturally and experientially fortified by a common philosophical thrust of the College, facilitated development of a similar attitude and expression. Two characteristics of the theses are apparent: brevity of treatment and similarity of bibliographies.

In the Senior Class theses prepared for the Intelligence department in the early 1930's, the class members examined one principal topic (though slight variations were permitted in emphasis): The Inter-Relation in War of National Policy, Strategy, Tactics and Command.

In his thesis Admiral A. J. Hepburn stressed fundamental considerations although he saw naval tactics as an important link in the relationship. While his treatment of policy and strategy was restricted primarily to their basic elements, Hepburn viewed naval tactics as more complicated (because of the "illogical development" of ship types) than land tactics. Therefore, the nature of the command function brought the importance of the commander to the foreground. Hepburn believed the commander's personality and modus operandi were prime determinants in the outcome of every battle. As a result, the wise commander must develop a competent staff, prepared to devise and

implement the plan of operations. Wherever the commander does not provide for staff development, Hepburn foresaw the possibility of a "one-man show" with its inherent weaknesses.⁵⁸

The sole admiral in the 1932 class, John Halligan, examined the same topic one year after Hepburn. In his two-volume thesis (the second volume totaled sixteen pages), Rear Admiral Halligan (alert to the impact of construction cancellations on naval planning) declared that "when strategy and policy are not together, the result is very expensive to the nation." This condition existed in the United States, Halligan believed, "where coordination of policy and strategy is generally nonexistent." As a result of his assessment of the relationship between national policy, strategy, tactics, and command, Halligan concluded that since "the best security against war is preparedness," the individual officer programmed for high command responsibilities "should prepare himself professionally, mentally, temperamentally, and physically."⁵⁹

⁵⁸Rear Admiral A. J. Hepburn, Class of 1931 Thesis: "The Inter-Relation of War to National Policy, Strategy, Tactics and Command," 15 May 1931, NWCA-RG 12.

⁵⁹Rear Admiral John Halligan, Class of 1932 Thesis: "The Inter-Relation of War to National Policy, Strategy, Tactics and Command," 31 October 1931, ibid.

In his eleven-page thesis, Captain W. F. Halsey, Jr., begins his assessment with a two-page direct quotation, concerns himself throughout with a BLUE-ORANGE meeting, and places his strongest emphasis on tactical considerations. He concludes that "command is the nerve center that directs, controls, and coordinates the strategic and tactical. They are command's right and left hands. As command controls these hands, so command controls the war. Strategy, tactics, and command may be called the trinity of war; and the greatest of these is command."⁶⁰

Captain Halsey's convictions were shared by Major C. H. Tenney, USA, who noted (in eight and one-half pages) that while an equilibrium in strategy, tactics and command is essential "to early and complete success in the war . . . a knowledge of the factor of command or leadership . . . is by far the most essential."⁶¹

In 1934, the Department of Intelligence varied slightly its thesis requirement. Student officers were to present two theses, one strategic and one tactical in emphasis, chosen from three topical areas: the

⁶⁰Captain W. F. Halsey, Jr., Class of 1933 Thesis: "The Relationship in War of Naval Strategy, Tactics and Command," 16 May 1933, ibid.

⁶¹Major C. H. Tenney, USA, ibid.

influence of national policy on the strategy of a war in selected historical periods; the relationship in war between strategy, tactics and command (policy considerations had been dropped from the earlier sequence), or a selected topic of the student officer's preference acceptable to the department.

For his first thesis Captain J. H. Towers wrote on French policy and strategy during the American revolution and the lessons to be learned by the United States. Captain Towers noted that "war for revenge is not worthwhile" and the United States should never emulate French motivation in that war. While we do not have a policy of war against Japan, Towers observed, "our official actions have been such as to lead that country to believe that such is our policy" Towers maintained that American political leadership "should either abandon a policy which appears warlike and may provoke war, or, if we adhere to that policy we should adjust our national strategy to support it" In considering the relationship of naval policy and national strategy, Captain Towers accepted the contention that "we should have either a policy commensurate with our Navy, or a Navy commensurate with our policy." With this axiom in mind, the provisions of the various arms limitations agreements

were viewed as contrary to this desired equilibrium.⁶²

In his second thesis, Captain Towers considered a professional specialty in which he would acquire considerable eminence in the Second World War: naval aviation. Towers noted that "the introduction of aircraft in naval warfare has not changed the principles of such warfare; it has however given different relative weights to these principles, and likewise changed relatively the efforts required to achieve them."

While Towers saw the growth of aviation as affecting naval blockades with an increasing importance accruing to aircraft carriers, he concluded that the airship (in which the Navy was exhibiting considerable interest) as a general class "exercises no influence on naval strategy and tactics. Future developments may change this, but such developments are at present too speculative to warrant discussion."⁶³

⁶²Captain J. H. Towers, Class of 1934 Thesis: "The Relationship between French Policy and Strategy in the War of Coalition, 1777-1783, and Its Lessons for the United States," 1 February 1934, ibid.

⁶³Captain J. H. Towers, Class of 1934 Thesis: "The Influence of Aircraft on Naval Strategy and Tactics," 7 May 1934, ibid.

A classmate of Captain Towers, Commander Ellis M. Zacharias, examined national policy and strategy in the Sino-Japanese war and the Russian-Japanese war. In anticipating kamikazi attacks of the Second World War, Zacharias (a student of Japanese culture and fluent in the Japanese language) noted particularly "the contempt for death and the principle of self-sacrifice exhibited by Japanese at Port Arthur and the later suicides of those who failed to die fighting for the welfare of their country," adding that loss of life is rarely considered in the formulation of any Japanese military plans. Zacharias urged American political and military planners not to overlook this cultural characteristic in planning for any war involving the Japanese. In Zacharias' estimation, the great lesson of the Russian-Japanese war was that "organization and training were capable of rendering the Asiatic the equal, man for man, in military skill, bravery and endurance, of the Occidental even when backed by a long record of military triumphs. In our estimates, let us make no mistakes about this."⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Commander Ellis M. Zacharias, Class of 1934 Thesis: "The Relation between National Policy and Strategy in the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War," 1 February 1934, ibid.

While strategic considerations continued to draw Senior Class concentration, the Junior classes of the 1930-1934 period directed their thesis work to tactical, strategical (including administration) and political considerations--but at a lower order of magnitude. In the tactical area the student officers were permitted to select any historical period and to determine the principles and doctrines of naval tactics then employed which remained presently relevant. Since no one expected a student officer to label as inoperative the proclaimed immutability of the principles of war, the completed theses reflect considerable similarity in conclusions irrespective of the historical period examined.

In their analyses of the changelessness of the principles of warfare, however, the student officers selected widely varying time frames for evaluation. Regardless of the basic time period, the student officers arrived at one general conclusion best summarized by Lieutenant Commander W. S. Popham as a result of his study of the 1895-1905 period: " . . . the victorious naval commanders applied the principles of war, and that the vanquished disregarded these principles in whole or in part, in battle tactics, needs no

elaboration."⁶⁵

Lieutenant Commander R. L. Conolly, a member of the 1931 Junior Class, is the only member of that class for whom a complete set of theses have been retained at the College. Conolly, who would serve as Naval War College president, 1950-1953, submitted three short theses during the academic year on various aspects of destroyer operations in the battle of Jutland; development of naval staff and organization, and United States policy in the Caribbean area.

Regarding Jutland, Conolly believed that although German conception of the proper offensive employment of destroyer flotillas (plus well-designed destroyers and highly trained crews) augured well for German hopes of victory, favorable tactical situations for their use never developed. On the other hand, the English were uncertain in their support of "the principle of offensive employment." Although the British commander-in-chief was engaged in training his destroyer flotillas for offensive action, Conolly believed that at the time of Jutland they were "disorganized, untrained and unindoctrinated." As a result of this

⁶⁵ Lieutenant Commander W. S. Popham, Class of 1934 Thesis: "Naval Tactics: Based on a Study of the Period 1904-1905," 2 January 1934, ibid.

unpreparedness, the offensive performance of the British destroyer flotillas "met with most meagre success in spite of the utmost daring and bravery."⁶⁶

While Conolly wrote favorable in his second thesis of the Navy's present preparation in "peace-time administrative work and the execution of a highly competitive peace-time training program in engineering, gunnery, and elementary tactics," he indicated that "the organization of command does not provide for sufficiently flexible and decentralized administration nor adequately for the exercise of command in strategical and tactical operations." In Conolly's estimation, the necessary improvement would require a reorganization of the command functions of the various unit commanders of the Fleet and the assignment of properly trained and organized staffs to assist the unit commanders in the discharge of their duties.⁶⁷

In his thesis on policy conditions, Conolly chose Central America and the Caribbean area for study. His presentation is a superficial review of American

⁶⁶ Lieutenant Commander R. L. Conolly, Class of 1931 Thesis: "Destroyer Operations (both German and British) at the Battle of Jutland," 30 October 1930, ibid.

⁶⁷ Lieutenant Commander R. L. Conolly, Class of 1931 Thesis: "A Study of Naval Staff Organization and Duties," 28 February 1931, ibid.

presence in the area. He concluded that in the light of increasing tension and turmoil throughout the world, "the United States should go easy in the area and become more conciliatory."⁶⁸

12

The conclusion of the Laning-McNamee period marked an important milestone in the College's inter-war history. Although the physical facilities had been expanded and the Advanced Class had been approved, the staff and student officer membership would stabilize and, in the case of class size, would begin to decrease.

In 1934 the Navy began to respond to the leadership of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and to the increasing appropriations available for replacement and new construction. This expansion placed greater demands on available officer and enlisted personnel. World political developments, particularly in the Pacific, intensified the Navy's concern for possible naval action in that area. A mounting conviction that war loomed in the immediate future would affect the College program, assuring the new president an

⁶⁸ Lieutenant Commander R. L. Conolly, Class of 1931 Thesis: "A Study of Conditions which affect Certain Fundamental Policies of the United States in Central America and the Caribbean Area," 14 May 1931, ibid.

increasingly complex number of administrative problems
to test the responsiveness of the College program.

CHAPTER VIII

NAVAL EXPANSION AND THE COLLEGE RESPONSE:

1934 - 1939

By 1935 the political and economic instability in Europe had reached new levels of intensity. The breakdown of the naval status quo, expanding military establishments, and actual and threatened aggressions boded ill for peace lovers throughout the world. The spark of war, ignited earlier by the Japanese, was fanned further by Mussolini's attack on Ethiopia. In response to this aggression, Britain and France revealed their distrust of the League of Nations by supporting only a half-hearted and ineffectual set of economic sanctions. Meanwhile, Hitler abrogated the checks on German militarism established at Versailles by announcing rearmament in 1935 and remilitarization of the Rhineland one year later.

The turmoil next spread to Spain where, in 1936, after a general election, General Francisco Franco launched a rebellion against the new government. In the years immediately ahead, he received substantial

military support from Italy and Germany. The Spanish government, however, received less tangible Russian assistance. To cap off 1936 developments, Germany and Japan formed the Berlin-Tokyo alliance, being joined the following year by Italy.

In the summer of 1937, the Japanese military machine began a drive into five northern Chinese provinces. While the United States and Britain took increasingly strong positions against these Japanese moves (in no small measure occasioned by the threat to the "open door" policy) neither government was ready to apply military force against the Japanese.

At the same time, Hitler continued his aggressive ways with the seizure of Austria in 1938. By the terms of the Munich agreement, reached in autumn of that year, he was permitted to occupy a large part of Czechoslovakia without challenge. Early the next year he seized Prague, absorbing what remained of Czechoslovakia. Threats against Poland followed. European political leaders became convinced slowly that he planned to dominate the whole of eastern Europe. Resistance began to stiffen to Hitler's actions.

Finally, when Poland stood fast against Hitler's demands it extracted pledges of support from its friends and allies. This development did not thwart a brutal

invasion by German forces in September, 1939. The pledges lost their political flavor and assumed moral commitments. England and France declared war on Germany. The Second World War was underway. The efforts of two decades to achieve a lasting peace vanished in the smoke, stench, and sound of battle.

While the military renaissance of the mid-1930's was taking place in Europe and Japan, Americans remained primarily preoccupied with combatting the economic depression. The 1934 congressional elections resulted in enlarged majorities for the Democratic party. The New Deal program of President Franklin D. Roosevelt continued to unfold, sparking rising public concern as its direction became increasingly liberal. The rising opposition, essentially negative in nature and lacking positive counter-proposals, was generally ineffective. The 1936 Republican party platform would contain a generous sprinkling of New Dealish planks.

During the first two years of his second term, President Roosevelt appeared increasingly liberal in his political philosophy. Political conflicts became tinged with bitterness and acrimony. While the main purpose of the New Deal was still to achieve recovery, the desire to cooperate with business in the process became less apparent. Roosevelt also adopted, for the first time, the Keynesian theory of compensatory

government spending. He asked Congress repeatedly for large appropriations for relief and public works. A growing disenchantment with major New Deal programs, immersed in a mild recession in 1937, assured a Republican party comeback in the off-year elections of 1938. As New Deal economic legislation encountered more opposition, Roosevelt responded by directing his major attention to foreign affairs.

During the early years of his initial presidential term, Roosevelt had been absorbed in domestic problems, a major innovation in American foreign policy being recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933. Throughout the decade President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull would combine efforts to expand the "Good Neighbor" policy by repudiating intervention in Latin America, promising mutual economic advantages through increased trade, lower tariff barriers, and a "ge of united action against aggression.

Meanwhile, in response to rising totalitarianism in Germany, Japan, and Italy, as well as to the civil war raging in Spain, the Congress passed a series of neutrality acts designed to prevent American involvement in present and/or future wars. Hopefully, this disposition (along with rising isolationist and pacifistic sentiments) would assure non-involvement of the United States in future wars.

As Axis power grew more threatening, the Roosevelt administration gradually moved toward strengthening the American military and naval establishments. Early in the decade certain military expenditures were seen as aiding economic recovery. Later on, the national security theme explained increasing military expenditures, particularly in ordnance, aviation development, and ship construction.

When war broke out in 1939, American sentiment shifted dramatically. To a much greater extent than in the past Americans were preponderantly pro-Ally. Totalitarianism was anathema to American heritage. The fall of France in 1940 revealed the shaky American security posture. This condition sparked "the great debate" on isolation and intervention. The results of the debate continued to be a subject of bitter controversy. Neutrality legislation eventually was replaced by "lend-lease" measures. The growing partnership with Great Britain increased the possibility of active involvement in the war. This trend dictated the expansion of American military and naval establishments. The program was only partially underway when Japanese planes began their bombing runs in the skies over Pearl Harbor.

The United States naval establishment came alive in 1934. In this regard the leadership emanating from

the White House led to the Vinson-Trammell Act of that year. The passage of this legislation, over strong opposition from conservatives, isolationists, and pacifists, provided for a ship construction program to be spread over the next several years. The program would provide replacements and would raise naval strength to the authorizations allowed under the Washington and London treaties. It differed from previous legislation in providing for the construction of definite tonnage amounts rather than for a specific number of vessels. Heretofore congressional appropriations had been sufficient to cover the number of ships requested by the Department. However, over the years and owing to political reluctance, American ship construction had declined to a point where warships were not being launched in sufficient numbers to assure attainment of the treaty limits before its expiration in 1936. With the Vinson-Trammell Act, the objective became provision of full treaty strength (an additional six battleships, one aircraft carrier, two light cruisers, fifty-seven destroyers, and twenty-six submarines) sometime between 1939 and 1941.

Four years later, as the international situation continued to deteriorate, Roosevelt (alarmed by the trend of international events and increasingly turning the thrust of his administration away from domestic

issues) recommended a re-armament program to provide additional national security. For the naval establishment, this program would mean an expansion of approximately twenty per cent. President Roosevelt's proposal, again shepherded by Representative Vinson--a dedicated navalist--met strong opposition. A major factor in this resistance was the failure of the expansionists to emphasize the difference between expansion and modernization/replacement.

After six years of Roosevelt support the Navy showed clearly the magnitude of his leadership. Despite the slow start made in constructing new Pacific bases, those authorized would soon constitute parts of a well-planned system. The new ships would be of superior design and performance capability in comparison to similar classes in foreign navies. Only in submarines and destroyers would new ship construction fail to keep pace with the increase in overage ships. On the other hand, naval aviation maintained its pre-eminence. Finally, the entire expansion program also created new major administrative and operational problems for the Department. The extensive input affected all material and manpower programs, including the education of officers for "higher command."

The start of the Second World War placed strong demands on a Navy Department undergoing severe growing

pains. President Roosevelt progressively led the nation, often deviously, through states of re-armament, support of Great Britain and later Russia, and finally into the undeclared war in 1941. Throughout these political and diplomatic machinations the Navy became increasingly involved in actively supporting the Allied cause. Only the advent of Pearl Harbor remained.

2

In June, 1934, another staunch friend of the Naval War College, Rear Admiral Edward C. Kalbfus, began the first of his two terms as president of the institution. Like most of his predecessors, Admiral Kalbfus had had a considerable association with the College both as student officer and staff member. This native Pennsylvanian had attended the senior course in 1926-1927 and had served as head of Division A (Logistics) in the first year of the Pringle presidency. These earlier assignments gave Kalbfus a sound understanding of the College operation while fostering a genuine affection for the institution and the city of Newport.¹

¹Rear Admiral Edward C. Kalbfus was born in Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania, 24 November 1877. He attended the Naval Academy, where he captained the Navy baseball team in his First Class (Senior) year and was graduated in 1899. During the Spanish-American war, and prior to his graduation from the Naval Academy, he participated in the battle of Santiago and the Havana blockade. Sea duty in the Orient, Mediterranean, and

Shortly after his arrival, Admiral Kalbfus undertook a reorganization of the College structure. This action appears primarily as a shifting of labels since the functions involved and the incumbent staff remained substantially unchanged.² At his direction, the four existing departments (Operations, Intelligence, Research [including Correspondence] and Administration) were reduced to three (Educational, Intelligence and Research, and Administration).

Caribbean (as well as participation in the cruise of the Great White Fleet, 1907-1909), interspersed with duty in Washington, D.C., accounted for much of his early career. Kalbfus was on duty in Vera Cruz during the Mexican-American problems of 1916, and during the First World War was commanding officer of a troop transport. In the post-war years Kalbfus shuttled between command of battleships, attendance and staff assignments at the Naval War College, Washington duty, and staff assignments on major fleet commands. He came to Newport from command of Destroyers, Battle Force, U.S. Fleet. Naval War College, NWCA-RG 22.

²Naval War College, Outline History, p. 405. No rationale for this reorganization was found in Naval War College Archives, Newport, or the National Archives, Washington, D.C.

A possible explanation may be inferred in Kalbfus' letter to Commander J. W. Wilcox, Jr., who he was attempting to persuade to join the College staff. In commenting on the thrust of his administration, Kalbfus declared that "with my usual desire to not let well enough alone, I am attempting to consolidate a great many things here which hitherto have existed and have been carried on largely by tradition." Kalbfus to Commander J.W. Wilcox, Jr., 18 October, 1935, NWCA-RG 2.

Puzzlingly, in the second year of his initial presidency, Kalbfus reverted almost identically to the organizational structure existing at the time of his arrival. In short, Operations replaced Educational and the research function lost its equal billing with Intelligence through absorption by the latter. Only the Department of Administration remained unchanged.³

In spirit and wording Admiral Kalbfus' second organizational alignment reflected his commitment to clarifying the College mission.⁴ Borrowing heavily from the College pamphlet dealing with "the estimate of the situation," Kalbfus urged the student officer to maximize the "unusual opportunity for developing his mental capacity along the lines of the higher aspects of his profession." The College's raison d'etre, he noted, had been reaffirmed most recently in General Order 168 (Training for Higher Command): "To further the development of the mental capacity of officers to that high degree requisite to the effective conduct of war in order that they may be prepared for higher command."⁵

³Naval War College, Outline History, p. 417.

⁴Naval War College, "The Mission and Organization of the U.S. Naval War College, 1935-1936," NWCA-Record Group 25, General Subjects, (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG 25.)

⁵Ibid.

Admiral Kalbfus added that approximately fifty years operating experience had convinced the College administration that "the indispensable intellectual characteristics of the successful military leader are the ability to reason logically from premise to decision, to apply this logical process to the solution of a military situation, to arrive at a sound decision, to state that decision concisely and clearly, to draw up a plan supporting that decision, and to formulate intelligent and clearly worded orders putting that plan, or portions of it, into effect." To direct a program designed to develop this professional ability (student technical skill and knowledge, plus experience and resource, were taken for granted), Kalbfus believed that the instructional departments (Operations and Intelligence) were main elements in the accomplishment of the College mission.⁶

Admiral Kalbfus went into considerable detail in describing the role of the Operations and Intelligence departments. The strength of his conviction may well indicate why no additional organizational changes were undertaken during the balance of the interwar period. He envisioned the Operations department as contributing to the reasoning power of the student officer through the "estimate of the situation" exercise and its

⁶Ibid.

application to strategic and tactical situations, particularly in the formulation of plans and orders.⁷

The other organizational component--the Intelligence department--was viewed as providing the student officer with the information he needed to reason effectively in strategic and tactical situations. This responsibility involved the preparation and maintenance (in current condition) of all College publications dealing with the naval vessels and merchant marine of the various world powers; compilation of available data on all geographical areas important from the standpoint of naval strategy, and analysis of chart and game maneuvers (including tabulation of all valuable data in convenient form for future reference, and summarization of important features for the purpose of stressing principles.)⁸

While Admiral Kalbfus believed that the war gaming exercises at the College were of immeasurable value, he sounded a note of caution on the validity of game results. The latter did not axiomatically transfer to actual warfare, he emphasized, since assumptions and empirical rules precluded their conclusiveness.⁹ Indeed, at a later date, he confessed that "we can make

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

any type of vessel work up here provided we draw up the rules to fit."¹⁰

As the 1930 decade progressed, the search for and retention of a competent staff became increasingly vexatious. This condition derived, in part, from officer shortages created by an expanding navy. In addition, there was the increasing reluctance of high-ranking officers to view attendance at the Naval War College as essential to career progression as heretofore. This reluctance also accrued from increased possibilities for major commands arising from the aforesaid expansion.

While Admiral Kalbfus was able to add several officers to the College staff during his presidencies who would contribute substantially to the achievement of the College goals, he was frequently dismayed that any officer would place his personal assessment of his future career pattern ahead of the needs of the Navy.¹¹

¹⁰ Kalbfus to Captain J. W. Wilcox, Jr., 17 February 1936, NWCA-RG 2.

¹¹ Admiral Kalbfus had difficulty perceiving why any officer would refuse either a College staff or class assignment. Record Group 2 of the College archives contains considerable correspondence reflecting Kalbfus' attitude.

At this time naval officers were detailed to the College in several ways. An incoming president usually found the majority of staff positions filled by incumbents. However, through various means, he was aware of

Despite the completion of the Pringle Hall addition in 1934, Admiral Kalbfus early assumed the traditional mendicancy of his predecessors. While the new addition provided more operational space for the College program and its personnel, the library facility had benefited only minimally from this expansion.¹² Kalbfus moved to alleviate the library's space problems. In the past, regular requests for library expansion had been submitted to the Department, but without favorable response. Rejections regularly followed requests, Department priorities continuing to favor hardware over software.

In writing to the Bureau of Navigation, Kalbfus urged an allocation of funds for library expansion.¹³

available staff vacancies for which he could designate preferences. His recommendations to the Bureau of Navigation, which were based upon personal observation or service reputations of the designates, were followed as closely as possible by the Bureau. Notwithstanding, circumstances often prevented assignment of the most preferred or most logical choices.

¹²At this time the library had been able to obtain several rooms on the lower floor of Mahan Hall and had installed steel shelving up to a height of eleven shelves. This action postponed for a short time the inevitable major enlargement. Library and Archives Officer to Addressees, 20 April 1951, NWCA, Library: 1899-1970, Record Group 9, (hereafter cited as NWCA-RG 9).

¹³Kalbfus to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 26 November 1934, NWCA-RG 2.

He noted that the failure to develop more space, following completion of the Pringle addition had resulted in library shelf space for only 30,000 of the 50,000 volumes on hand. The remainder were kept boxed and were made available to student officers only after considerable effort. Space shortages between 1925-1934 had been lessened somewhat by placing about 3,500 books in small collections at designated locations.¹⁴

In renewing requests for funds, Kalbfus cited the existing wing of the library had been added about thirty years ago "when the importance of the College was not completely grasped." In the intervening years the College growth factor had created a library facility inadequate in floor and storage space. Specifically, "the small adjoining room, which is used as a reading room for newspapers and periodicals, contains but two

¹⁴These small individual collections had been established during the academic year 1920-1921. From an original number of ten they increased slowly until 1940 when about fifty-four existed. Although the individual collection originally consisted of approximately 100 volumes, the number fell to sixty over the years. By 1951, the costs of augmenting these individual collections brought the entire question of their value under re-assessment. At that time a library committee voted to discontinue the individual collections. Library and Archives Officers to Addressees, 20 April 1951, ibid.

small tables, both completely covered with current publications. There can be no provision, at present, for retention of important magazines." Charts and maps, a vital resource for the College program, similarly lacked proper stowage or space nearby for their use. In the light of these conditions, Kalbfus believed an extension to the present library warranted high priority. Only with this extension completed would facilities be adequate to accommodate the projected enrollment increases.¹⁵

In keeping with past experience, Kalbfus was no more successful than his predecessors in prying funds from the Department for needed construction work. However, he was able to obtain Bureau of Navigation approval to name the College library after Captain Alfred T. Mahan.¹⁶

Two years later, when concluding his first presidency, Kalbfus again felt impelled to protest the perennial Department and congressional rejections of his requests for construction funds. Although the College had a long standing request for an extension

¹⁵ Kalbfus to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 26 November 1934, ibid.

¹⁶ Kalbfus to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 20 May 1935, NA-RG 24, Box 573. The Bureau's approval is contained in Chief, Bureau of Navigation to President, Naval War College, 28 May 1935, ibid.

to Luce Hall, Kalbfus reiterated his belief that the library extension represented the foremost priority.¹⁷

In his latest justification for expansion of the library, Kalbfus cited anew to the Secretary of Navy the College's value to "the entire officer corps of the Navy" (a feature enhanced by its lack of "local identification"). In emphasizing that the increasing number of student officers taxed the library's capability to the point where it was now "a mere repository of books and altogether inadequate in this respect," Kalbfus re-echoed several earlier observations:

Many of the volumes are necessarily stored elsewhere. The available floor space permits of a very few chairs and no room whatever for quiet study with the result that books must be drawn out and perused elsewhere. The newspaper and magazine room is scarcely larger than the ward-room of a destroyer. There is no room for racks. The shelves are filled with books. The two small tables are covered with periodicals.¹⁸

Kalbfus felt constrained not to push for the extension of Luce Hall at this time as "the new wing (Pringle) with its spacious gameboard and handsome auditorium have removed, for the present, the necessity of requiring three, four, and five student officers in the same study room, hitherto a feature which tended

¹⁷ibid. Kalbfus to Secretary of the Navy, 2 June 1936,

¹⁸Ibid.

to defeat the purpose of the College." However, the Luce extension would be required eventually, Kalbfus warned, "unless overcrowding is again resorted to or unless the attendance of 114 represents the maximum that will constitute the classes in the years to come." He visualized, somewhat optimistically as time and events would reveal, "a larger Advanced Class and a time when the strength of the Junior Class will, in effect, correspond to that of a Naval Academy class after approximately fifteen years of actual service and average attrition." While College persistency for additional construction funds would succeed eventually, the hopes for steadily increasing enrollments would be thwarted by personnel needs to man an enlarging navy.¹⁹

On the same day he wrote to the Secretary of the Navy, Admiral Kalbfus directed an unofficial communication for support to Rear Admiral Adolphus Andrews, a long-standing supporter of the College and then serving as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation. Stressing the urgent need for such construction, Kalbfus added his fear that "the War College would never receive anything in the way of extensions to its permanent plant as long as the recommendations that emanate from here are included on the industrial list." This latter development,

¹⁹Ibid.

arising from depressed economic conditions, placed the College needs in direct competition with Navy non-educational projects. This procedure assured little priority to College requests. Admiral Kalbfus disclosed an earlier discussion of College construction needs with Admiral Standley who now held the dual positions of Secretary of Navy and Chief of Naval Operations. As a result of these discussions, Kalbfus believed the time was ripe for both Andrews and himself to approach Standley on the matter of liberalized construction funds for the College.²⁰

5

Throughout his two presidencies Admiral Kalbfus was involved intimately in curriculum matters. Not only was there the task of maintaining the relevancy of strategy, tactics and international law studies, but there existed the responsibility of guiding the newly established Advanced Class and (as a personal project) revision of the College publication dealing with the "estimate of the situation." This publication had been

²⁰ Kalbfus to Rear Admiral Adolphus Andrews, 2 June 1936, ibid.

At this time, the College's operating budget approximated an annual expenditure of \$105,000. McNamee to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 26 May 1934, NWCA-RG 2.

utilized extensively in College exercises designed to develop the student officer's "mental capacity."

After years of discussion and exhortation, the first Advanced Class convened in July, 1934. The initial class consisted of eleven members, one of whom (Rear Admiral William S. Pye) was designated senior member.²¹ Admiral Pye had compiled an impressive naval career, an important facet of which had been directed toward strengthening naval education and training.

In May, 1935, the Advanced Class submitted a report of its deliberations for the completed academic year. Reportedly the class considered the policies of the United States and "a certain foreign country," the conflicts inherent in such policies, and "the probable political objectives in case the conflicting policies

²¹The balance of the Advanced Class consisted of Rear Admiral Walter N. Vernou, Captains William Baggaley, Robert A. Theobald, and Byron McCandless; Commanders Howard B. McCleary, Rufus King, Augustine H. Gray, and Herbert R. Hein; and two colonels, Edward M. Offley, USA, and Ellis B. Miller, USMC. During the academic year when Admirals Pye and Vernou were detached from duty at the College, Captain Baggaley became senior member of the class. Naval War College, Register of Officers, p. 48.

Rear Admiral E. C. Kalbfus and Captain W. F. Halsey, Jr., were included in the initial nominees for the course. While Halsey went elsewhere, Kalbfus came to the College as president. Chief, Bureau of Navigation to McNamee, 14 April 1934, NA-RG 24, Box 572.

should develop into a war between them." The Advanced Class then prepared a "Grand Strategical Plan" for such a war together with an outline plan for joint Army-Navy action in the war.²²

Admiral Kalbfus was not encouraged by the direction and production of the initial Advanced Class. Writing to Admiral William Leahy, then Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, Kalbfus expressed discouragement over the prospects for the class.²³ Essential to the success of the class was a class membership of outstanding officers. This need had not been met in the 1935 class. He regretted that Rear Admiral Kimmel and a few other preferred senior officers were unavailable for

²²Naval War College, Outline History, p. 407. The inquiries of Naval War College archives and library staff personnel regarding the fate of this and subsequent reports prepared by the Advanced Class failed to develop any substantive leads. It was considered generally that since the reports were classified they were retained initially in the Classified Archives. Upon declassification, they failed to develop sufficient utilization to justify retention and were destroyed in the interests of space economy.

Copies of the Advanced Class reports forwarded to the Bureau of Navigation probably experienced the same fate. The Bureau routinely inquired of the College for disposition instructions covering the reports, problems, lectures, etc., it had received through the years. The response of the College administration was to authorize destruction. Kalbfus to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 4 May 1936, NA-RG 24, Box 573.

²³Kalbfus to Rear Admiral William D. Leahy, 10 May 1935, NWCA-RG 2.

the next class. These developments left only "Admiral Train (Rear Admiral Charles R. Train) who, I am afraid, is not particularly enthusiastic over coming up here, and Captain Kerrick (Charles S. Kerrick) as the only senior line officer in the class."

Admitting the unfortunate circumstances that placed the College's search for senior officers for the Advanced Class in competition to the Navy's needs for these same officers elsewhere, Kalbfus believed this problem would occur annually. Yet he believed the success of the class depended on "having a particularly well fitted flag officer as Senior Member, and this is not always going to be possible." At this time he was undecided "as to whether the Class had better be discontinued or carried on short handed and possibly only with junior ranks." One possible solution Kalbfus offered would require that "the Advanced Class be composed of officers who flow up from the Senior Class while still here and by providing a permanent staff officer of considerable rank to take charge of the Class."²⁴

Admiral Kalbfus' fears for the effective organization of the Advanced Class would be confirmed in the

²⁴Ibid.

years immediately ahead. Various conditions external to the College operation would hinder development of the Advanced Class concept in the years prior to United States involvement in the Second World War.

Bearing in mind the organizational restructuring instituted by Admiral Kalbfus for the academic year 1935-1936, an understanding of the basic thrust of the College program at this time can be gleaned from the Department of Operations (formerly Educational Department) program. As customary, the Senior and Junior classes met as a group at the start of the 1935-1936 academic year to hear the staff presentation on preparation of the situation estimate. The classes then divided, the Senior Class considering in sequence throughout the year an array of strategic and tactical problems ranging from preparation of battle plans through night destroyer attacks upon a screened formation and comprehensive search problems dealing with the various search methodologies currently used by the Navy to cruiser operations and attack on and defense of trade in the western Pacific. Another sequential problem studied by the Senior Class included a series of exercises dealing with successive phases of a war in the Pacific. The College curriculum increasingly reflected a mounting concern for the deteriorating situation in

China and the growing conviction that if the United States went to war, the most likely enemy would be Japan.²⁵

Junior Class course work in strategy and tactics at this time generally followed that of the Senior Class. The major difference between the work of the two classes was the omission of strategic problems from the Junior Class program. The members did join the Senior Class in the playing of two operations problems. In this way, the Department of Operations staff believed Junior Class members became better acquainted with strategic problems, with the duties of staff officers, and with the responsibilities of small unit commanders. This cooperative effort between classes continued virtually unchanged throughout the balance of the 1930's. As usual, the work of the Operations department concluded with an advanced base problem.²⁶

As a basis for his analytical effort, the student officer was expected to use the College's traditional means of "estimating" a situation. Through his earlier association with the College as a student officer and staff member, integrated with his wide sea experience,

²⁵Naval War College, Department of Operations, "Prospectus of the Naval War College Courses in Strategy and Tactics," June, 1935, NWCA-RG 18.

²⁶Ibid.

Admiral Kalbfus concluded the time was ripe to reform the estimate procedure and to expand its essential structure. In time, Admiral Kalbfus would consider his effort in this revision as constituting his major contribution to the College's development. Although the College publication dealing with situation estimates had wide acceptance throughout the Navy, the publication actually "bore no visible approval by the Navy Department or by any fleet commander." However, Navy Regulations prescribed that the order form, as developed at the College, for fleet and vessel movements in service, had the approval of the Chief of Naval Operations.²⁷

Shortly after his return to Newport in 1934 Admiral Kalbfus began his revision of the "estimate" pamphlet. Piecemeal revisions in the past had actually weakened its effectiveness to a point where, in Kalbfus' opinion, a complete revision was necessary. In line with this conviction, Kalbfus declared that

the year 1910 marks the real beginning of the College. Without in any way discounting the work of earlier years, it now stands out clearly

²⁷Naval War College, "Sound Military Decision (including the Estimate of the Situation and the Formulation of Directives)," 26-27 July 1939, NWCA-RG 13.

Also see Cullen, "From the Kriegssacademie to the Naval War College," ibid. Cullen treats the antecedent roots of the "estimate" pamphlet, Kalbfus' efforts, and subsequent modifications thereof.

in my mind that there was no central motive governing the courses here. The College promoted an appreciation of the value of the study of the art of war, but did not know how to study its several essential elements in relation to the whole.²⁸

To achieve this integrated whole would require revision of the "estimate" pamphlet. This process had been undertaken several times in the past.²⁹ On this occasion Kalbfus asked the staff officers to examine present and past formats of the pamphlet (dating back to 1910) and to submit their recommended changes. For basic guidance the staff officers were advised to bear in mind the College mission ("to train officers for higher command") and the provisions of General Order 168 (requiring every commissioned officer to possess "sufficient knowledge to interpret correctly the strategic dispositions and tactical decisions" of the commander, thereby fostering a common doctrine).³⁰

Admiral Kalbfus decried the prevailing tendency to employ the estimate procedure as merely a check-off

²⁸Kalbfus to Captain J. W. Wilcox, Jr., 18 October 1935, NWCA-RG 2.

²⁹There had been at least six revisions prior to Kalbfus' project. Revisions prior to 1926 had only involved the "estimate" pamphlet. In 1926, however, the "estimate" was combined with another College publication--The Formulation of Orders, Doctrine, and Dissemination of Information."

³⁰Kalbfus, "Memorandum for the Staff of the War College," 23 October 1934, NWCA-RG 2.

list or rule-of-thumb device for decision making. Not so, said Kalbfus, who maintained that the existence of such an attitude revealed the need for a complete revision of the pamphlet.³¹

With characteristic enthusiasm, Admiral Kalbfus launched into the revision of the estimate pamphlet. He sought advice and counsel from many sources, both within and outside the military and naval sectors.³² Due to inherent and developed difficulties, the revision task extended over two years. In the final analysis

³¹Ibid.

³²One prominent naval officer who Kalbfus consulted was Captain Dudley W. Knox. In one exchange of correspondence, Kalbfus maintained that his attempt to explain the College mission by reducing it to a definite "Task and Purpose" marked the initial attempt in this direction. He declared that his real purpose in doing so was "to do away with any preconceived ideas as to this being a test plant for war plans or a school which is the last word in teaching the Art of War." Kalbfus to Captain Dudley W. Knox, 14 June 1935, NWCA-RG 2.

In an earlier letter to Captain Knox, Kalbfus asked him to examine the preface being prepared for the upcoming revision. Admiral Kalbfus expressed dismay that many naval officers conceived of "doctrine" as essentially specific whereas he (and Knox concurred) maintained that "doctrine" was essentially general and brief--the approach he would incorporate in the revision. Kalbfus to Captain Dudley W. Knox, 6 June 1935, ibid.

One non-military expert was consulted regarding clarification of terminology (mental capacity, intellect, etc., as pertaining to the mission of the College). Kalbfus to Reverend William A. McClenthen, D.D., 13 May 1935, ibid.

At a later date, Admiral Kalbfus thanked "Father Mac" for his suggestions. However, they had arrived too late for inclusion in the revision. He promised

the entire project devolved on Kalbfus who devoted most of the second year of his presidency to its completion.³³ As reconstituted, the pamphlet had been expanded "from a handbook on the estimate of the situation to a textbook for use at the War College, a condensed abstract pointing out the extent of the field to be investigated in time of war . . . "³⁴

to incorporate the clergyman's suggestions in the reprint which would surely occur before the end of the year. Kalbfus also acknowledged the many beneficial discussion he had had with his wife ("who is being trained, as you know, along psychological lines") before reaching his decision to stress development of "mental capacity" rather than "intellectual development" as part of the College mission. Kalbfus to Reverend William A. McClenthen, D.D., 13 May 1935, ibid.

³³Commander Thomas B. Buell, "Admiral Edward C. Kalbfus and the Naval Planner's 'Holy Scripture': Sound Military Decision," NWC Review, XXV (May-June, 1973), pp. 31-41, (hereafter cited as "Holy Scripture"). Buell recounts Kalbfus' determination to revise the estimate completely, the problems encountered in the task, as well as the weaknesses contained in the final product.

³⁴Naval War College, Staff Presentation, "Sound Military Decision," ibid.

Admiral Kalbfus indicated his "general plan of putting considerable background material into this pamphlet in the way of fundamental considerations which bear on the Art of Science of War and the Art of Command." He maintained further that in this way "we will at least be able to let the student get rid of the idea that so long as he follows the exact form of the 'Estimate' he will become a great naval leader." Kalbfus to Captain J. W. Wilcox, Jr., 18 October 1935, NWCA-RG 2.

The new publication (entitled "Sound Military Decision") was released in 1936.³⁵ At that time the Chief of Naval Operations required all Fleet flag officers as well as commanders of major support activities to evaluate the new publication and to indicate whether it should be released as a Department or College publication. While the latter prevailed, the generally favorable comments were confirmed by the publication's continued use by naval planners.³⁶ With

³⁵ Admiral Kalbfus was satisfied with the new publication though he believed "many of the old line may not like it. He added he would be thankful "if it starts the young people in the correspondence course to thinking." Kalbfus to Captain D. C. Bingham, USN, Army War College, 17 November 1936, NWCA-RG 2.

As issued, the publication emphasized that the proper solution of military problems required formulation of a "sound decision" as to the requisite action. The soundness of the decision, in large measure, determined the effectiveness of the resulting action. The decision-making process in solution of military and naval problems was seen as consisting of (1) selecting correct objectives, (2) planning the detailed operations required, (3) transmitting the intention clearly to ensure initiation of well-coordinated action, and effectively supervising such action. Naval War College, Sound Military Decision, Revised Edition (Newport, 1942), pp. i-v, 1-4.

Effective use of the publication required a systematic, sequential consideration of each phase of the decision making process, anticipating in many respects programmed instructional texts of a later year.

³⁶ The major criticisms of the revised publication were its excessive length, complexity and prose. Buell summarizes these weaknesses thusly: "few could understand his writing and the scope of his work was inappropriate for those who had to use it." Buell, "Holy Scripture," ibid., pp. 34, 40.

only minor modification, the issuance prevailed into the postwar years.

6

The academic year 1936-1937 had been underway but a few months when Navy operational needs required Admiral Kalbfus' detachment from the College. This situation was unusual since shifts in the College presidency normally occurred at the end of the school year.³⁷ It was the only mid-year shift in command that occurred at the College in the interwar period. However, the naval expansion program was making personnel demands upon the Navy which differed substantially from conditions which had prevailed during the 1920's.

To succeed Admiral Kalbfus in the College presidency, the Navy Department designated Rear Admiral

³⁷ Newport Daily News, December 14, 1936. At a civic farewell dinner for the Admiral and Mrs. Kalbfus, Newport mayor, Henry S. Wheeler, presented the Admiral with "a silver Candlestick of colonial design" while Mrs. Kalbfus received flowers.

Newport Daily News, December 15, 1936. At this reception, held in the Viking Hotel and sponsored by the College staff and student officers, Admiral Kalbfus spoke briefly. He expressed his thanks to the guests for their thoughtfulness and generosity while reminding them that "the primary purpose of a naval officer was to be at sea."

Earlier in the day he had taken leave of the College's civilian staff and enlisted personnel. He lauded them for their cooperation and support, adding special praise for the civilian staff whom he described as "the backbone of the college."

Charles P. Snyder, then serving as Commander, Cruiser Division Six, Scouting Force. Admiral Snyder was no stranger to the College and the Newport area, having completed the senior course in 1925 and having served on the College staff, 1925-1926.³⁸

Upon his return to Newport in January, 1937, Admiral Snyder determined to continue the organizational structure established earlier by Admiral Kalbfus. A mid-year arrival discouraged any structural experimentation. Snyder was content to provide the new organizational alignment ample time to reveal its effectiveness.

The mid-year arrival also meant that Admiral Snyder faced no immediate staffing problems. In the following

³⁸Rear Admiral Charles Philip Snyder was born in Charleston, West Virginia, 10 July 1879. Upon graduation from the local high school, he entered Washington and Lee University, attending for one year before entering the Naval Academy in 1896. Graduated from the Academy in 1900 and commissioned in 1902 after the required two years of sea service, Snyder moved progressively through the commissioned ranks and increasing command responsibilities. His experience pattern followed the normal sequence and high level performance required for successful advancement: command at sea in major combatant ships (battleships and cruisers) and shore duty in major administrative billets (Naval Academy, Hydrographic Office, Manager of Industrial Department [Portsmouth, N.H.] Navy Yard, and Junior and Senior classes and staff assignments at the Naval War College.) Naval War College, Presidents, ibid.

Newport Daily News, January 2, 1937. Upon his return to Newport, Admiral Snyder commented favorably on the enlargement of College facilities which had transpired since his last assignment there, adding that he was "pleased to return to duty here."

two years he sought to maintain staff stability in the face of increasing demands for officer personnel throughout the Navy.³⁹

In August, 1937, the academic stature of many of the College staff and student officers was unexpectedly enhanced. Prior to this time most members of the staff and student body did not possess a college degree. Fleet experience (subsequent to completion of the Naval Academy course) and completion of the Senior course were major determinants in selection for College staff assignments. Formal academic preparation was not considered essential for a professional staff promulgating naval strategy and tactics. When academic subjects were considered at the College, outside specialists were invited. Yet a small number of naval officers had received college degrees through the Postgraduate School, through specialized programs pertinent to the naval profession and offered at public and private universities, and, on occasion, through independent study under a variety of

³⁹While Captain J. W. Wilcox, Jr., remained as chief of staff throughout Snyder's presidency (having moved over from Operations), new officers directed departmental operations in the academic years 1937-1938 and 1938-1939. In Operations, Captain Wilcox was followed by Captain Raymond K. Spruance and Captain George H. Bowdey; in Intelligence, Captain H. L. Pence was succeeded by Captain Henry M. Jenson and Captain Cary W. Magruder. It was during this period also that Captain R. K. Turner was assigned to the Operations Department. Naval War College, Register of Officers, pp. 52, 54, and 56.

efforts. At this time the total number of naval officers with degrees was relatively small.

Prior to 1931 Naval Academy graduates received a diploma signifying completion of the course of study. In October, 1930, however, the Academy program was accredited by the Association of American Universities, thereby qualifying the 1931 and subsequent graduating classes to receive a Bachelor of Science degree.

Congressional action in July, 1937, permitted graduates of the service academies prior to 1931 to petition the superintendents of their respective academies for a retroactive grant of the baccalaureate. The Naval War College administration urged present staff members and student officers so eligible to petition for their degree.⁴⁰ A number of the College officer personnel availed themselves of this opportunity.

The maintenance of a stable College staff was not the sole problem caused by the rising demand for officer personnel throughout the expanding naval establishment. As the 1930's progressed the problem of maintaining (or more desirably, increasing) student enrollment became more difficult.⁴¹ After the mid-point of the decade the

⁴⁰Chief of Staff to All officers, 31 August 1937, NWCA-RG 2.

⁴¹Kalbfus later observed that the decreasing availability of officers eligible to enroll in the resident

student officer enrollment began to decrease steadily.⁴²

A decreasing enrollment created substantial administrative and operational problems. The resulting staff and

courses compounded an existing qualitative problem. "During my years at the Naval War College, nine in all, I was impressed by the fact that officers were not selected for duty at the College. Instead the Bureau of Navigation was forced to send such officers as could be spared from other operational and technical fields. It was an unfortunate fact, to put it flatly, that this practice resulted in officers being sent to the College as students who had no naval future and, therefore, were being sent because there was no place else to send them. Of course, the shortage of officers was the underlying reason for this deplorable condition, outside demands becoming more insistent, while the regular line officer strength remained practically fixed. The study of war by those retained primarily for the purpose of waging war was thus progressively forced into the background." Naval War College, Staff Study, The Naval War College, (Newport, 1954), N-13.

⁴²The basic structure of the College program remained virtually unchanged after the establishment of the Junior course in 1924. The sole addition was the formation of the Advanced Class in 1934.

Student enrollment in the various courses fluctuated after 1924 with the Senior Class revealing the greatest stability during the period. Senior Class enrollment ranged from a high of 53 (1938-1939) to a low of 28 (1940-1941). The proximity of the high and low years reflects the sharp reversal in the availability of officer personnel for the College program.

The Junior Class enrollment also revealed the contraction in the available supply of student officers. From a beginning class of 22 students in 1923-1924, the Junior Class enrollment ranged between a high of 52 (1928-1929) and a low of 5 (1940-1941). For the five years preceding the 1941 College reorganization, Junior Class enrollment averaged 13 student officers.

The third component of the student body (the Advanced Class) began with an enrollment of 11 students

resource under-utilization rate became acute as the 1930's progressed. Excess capacity created by dwindling enrollments would challenge Admiral Snyder and his successor, Admiral Kalbfus, to devise remedial programs to eliminate the developing slack.

In his attempt to expand student officer enrollment, Snyder suggested a number of untapped sources.⁴³ Earlier, in facing the same problem, Kalbfus had been inclined to press the Coast Guard to resume designating officers to attend the College courses. However, at a later date, he would agree with Admiral William Leahy who, while Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, was

unable to say what useful purpose, from the point of view of either the Navy or the War College, could be accomplished by educating Revenue Cutter officers in the duties of high naval command. They already have a flag officer, naval uniforms, side boys, salutes, naval status in other respects, etc., and they probably have in mind acquiring the few remaining things that are left as exclusive naval positions and possibilities, including high command in war commensurate with their recently acquired rank and dignity.⁴⁴

in 1934-1935, rose to 12 in 1936-1937, and dropped to 5 in the final prewar class (1940-1941).

Enrollment figures cited here have been obtained from the Naval War College, Register of Officers.

⁴³Snyder to Chief of Bureau of Navigation, 10 May 1938, NA-RG 24, Box 573. In one instance, Snyder indicated that there would be room for four Foreign Service Officers in the Advanced Class; six in the Senior Class, and four in the Junior Class.

⁴⁴Admiral William D. Leahy to Kalbfus, 4 April 1935, ibid. Kalbfus did not always accept Leahy's

Foreign naval officers represented another possible source of potential students. However, this source (which would be tapped in the years following the Second World War) was not considered seriously at this time since there was "no legal authorization" to justify their attendance.⁴⁵

There were no major demands for expansion of physical plant facilities during the Snyder administration. While small improvement would be realized in the library area, requests for new major construction ended. In the light of decreasing student officer enrollment and the resulting excess plant capacity, justification for such construction would be most difficult.

One bright feature in the operational picture was the continued improvement in the library facility. As the 1930's were concluding the condition of the College

assessment of Coast Guard officers. However, he admitted to his conversion at a later date. Kalbfus to Chief of Bureau of Navigation, 22 December 1939, ibid.

⁴⁵Chief of Bureau of Navigation to Chief of Naval Operations, 20 July 1938, ibid. At this time the Bureau of Navigation was seeking counsel for its response to a Finnish naval officer who had expressed a desire to study tactics at the College.

Earlier, the application of the chief of staff of the Cuban Navy had been referred to the Navy Department for rejection. His attendance was considered "inappropriate." Pratt to Director of Naval Intelligence, 20 September 1926, NWCA-RG 2.

library was markedly improved over the original and small holdings, partial sets and small individual collections. The efforts of successive presidents, but most particularly Admiral Kalbfus, finally culminated in a library resource considered to be one of the finest of its kind in the country. Additional space, resulting from construction completed in 1938, eased the earlier storage and shelving problems.⁴⁶

7

Admiral Snyder initiated no significant modifications in the College curriculum during his presidency. In fact, the curriculum remained virtually unchanged during the decade. An overview of the College program for the academic year 1938-1939 reveals the extent to which programmatic rigidity had developed a preoccupation with the Japanese threat, unchanging operations problems, and a continued emphasis on tactical considerations. Yet this development is perhaps understandable since each year a new class of student officers arrived at the College and the material was new to them.

Meanwhile the 1939 Advanced Class sought to establish a sound operational basis. The class consisted of

⁴⁶Naval War College, "The Naval War College Library," 19 August 1946, NWCA-RG 9.

nine students: seven naval officers, one Marine and one Army officer. Obtaining a full quota for the Advanced Class had become increasingly difficult. The present class, however, followed the format of previous years, concentrating on the current BLUE-ORANGE situation. In this regard the class followed the same assignment as the three previous classes, adding a General Military Plan for the United States in the war with ORANGE.⁴⁷

For the balance of the academic year 1938-1939 the Advanced Class had been scheduled to study a BLUE-RED situation, following the same procedural lines as its BLUE-ORANGE study (war making capabilities, possible political problems leading to a conflict, etc.). The schedule was altered during the course of the year and the class was directed to undertake basic studies of twelve South American and Central American countries (except Mexico) along the following lines: (1) an analysis of the geographical, economic, political, psychological, and military factors; (2) national forces; (3) national policies; (4) attitude of totalitarian nations toward each of the countries studied, and (5) the points of conflict and of coincidence between

⁴⁷Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 2, 1938-1939, pp. 2-3.

the policies of the United States and each of the countries studied.⁴⁸

The course work for the Senior and Junior courses set during the first Kalbfus presidency also remained unchanged during the Snyder presidency. As then constituted the usual one-month orientation exercises for both classes continued: assigned reading and familiarization exercises, particularly in tactical work where the student officer was expected to familiarize himself with current tactical publications and doctrine, standard search methods, and culminating in a demonstration operations problem to acquaint and refresh student officers in planning procedures.

The operations curriculum for the Senior Class centered on eight operations problems--four tactical and four strategic.⁴⁹ The latter problems were played

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 1, 1937-1938, pp. 2-3. Operations Problem I, a tactical problem, involved the protection of a convoy while passing through restricted Aleutian waters. The next two problems, strategic in nature, considered the problems involved in the establishment and maintenance of naval control over a defensively important sea area, and the raiding and protecting of maritime communications in the western Pacific, Indian Ocean, China Sea and adjacent waters. Operations Problem IV involved the tactical employment of fleets assigned to protect convoy routes in the vicinity of Truk.

Only one of the three remaining operations problems was tactical in nature. Problem V involved the acquisition and maintenance of control in the western Pacific;

as chart and/or board maneuvers. During the first half of the academic year, Senior Class student officers completed studies in cruiser warfare and the battle of Jutland. The former exercise required a thorough examination of the strategy used to destroy and, alternately, to protect ocean trade with surface vessels in the First World War. In the Jutland study, the student officers were directed to concentrate upon the influence of strategy in tactical employment of fleets.

The Senior Class also worked a number of "quick decision" problems during the year, involving use of fleet doctrine and Tactical Instructions, before concluding the year's work with a systematic study of naval operations in the First World War.

As the 1930's came to a close nearly half of the Junior Class course work was performed in conjunction with the Senior Class. Indeed, four months of the program were identical to that of the Senior Class.⁵⁰ The

Problem VI simulated a fleet engagement in the North Atlantic including the necessary scouting, maneuvering and fighting, while Problem VII involved naval operations necessary for control of a selected sea area. The final problem, VIII, occupied only a half-day assignment on the maneuvering board. It involved a fleet action between two battle lines of unequal strength and speed.

⁵⁰Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 2, 1938-1939, p. 5; Supplement 3, 1939-1940, pp. 4, 6; Supplement 4, 1940-1941, p. 3.

major part of Junior Class work consisted of solving and maneuvering three tactical problems and one minor strategic and tactical problem. In order to provide familiarity with various strategic areas of the world these problems were distributed geographically throughout the western and central Pacific areas as well as the north and middle Atlantic and Caribbean areas. The problems also involved the following varied type situations: operations of a reconnaissance-raiding force and the operations incident to the interception of this force; battle tactics under conditions of limited visibility; protection and interception of convoy routes; and operations to gain and to maintain control of vital sea areas (including exercises in scouting and tactical maneuvers).⁵¹

The problem of identical course work was frequently compounded by the problem of repetition. The College administration encouraged completion of its correspondence course, when possible, prior to enrollment in its resident courses. However, Captain Ernest J. King, a member of the Senior Class during the academic year 1932-1933, was dismayed to find "that in spite of this requirement the first two months were taken up with matters that seemed students should have mastered before entering." King and Whitehill, Fleet Admiral, p. 235.

⁵¹Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 1, 1937-1938, pp. 2-3; Supplement 4, 1940-1941, p. 3.

Shortly after Admiral Snyder began his final year in the College presidency, a violent storm hit the lower New England area. The Long Island sound and Narragansett Bay areas felt its full fury. High waves battered the entire local coast line, washing away hundreds of small summer cottages, beach buildings, piers and wharves. Although the city of Newport was not as hard hit as other nearby towns, the Naval Training Station did suffer extensive property damage.⁵²

The Naval War College was more fortunate. Its limited physical facilities limited its losses to approximately \$6,000. In response to his request for additional funds to cover this loss, Admiral Snyder learned that the Department's regular appropriation could not absorb this expense. The College was advised to obtain the needed funds through federal relief channels or through an advance obligation on the College's operating appropriation for the next fiscal year.⁵³

⁵²Newport Recruit, 1 October 1938. The Newport area had been similarly hard hit two years earlier. The 1936 turbulent weather inflicted damages estimated in the millions to the local bay area. Newport Daily News, 19 September 1936.

⁵³Chief, Bureau of Navigation, to Snyder, 12 October 1938, NWCA-RG 2.

As Admiral Snyder's presidency was concluding, storm clouds of a different nature loomed ominously in Europe and the Far East. The Snyder years at the College had witnessed marked instability in these areas. In response to this condition, American military and naval establishments had begun to rearm in earnest. However, the task was impeded by neutrality legislation and national isolationistic tendencies. Before the 1939-1940 academic year had scarcely begun, the Second World War erupted.



A war gaming exercise (ca 1940) at the Naval War College, Newport, R. I.

CHAPTER IX

THE COLLEGE SHIFTS RESPONSE TO THE SECOND WORLD

WAR AND AMERICAL MOBILIZATION: 1939-1941

In June, 1939, Admiral Kalbfus returned to Newport "at his own request" to resume the presidency of the Naval War College.¹ Intended as his final duty assignment before retirement, Kalbfus came from the Pacific where he had been serving as Commander, Battle Forces, U.S. Fleet. The outgoing president, Admiral C. P. Snyder, departed for the Pacific to assume duty as Commander, Battleships, U.S. Fleet, with the rank of Vice Admiral.²

¹Newport Daily News, 28 June 1939. Dyer, Treadmill, pp. 1, 7. The "command slate" for assignments to begin during 1939 indicates Kalbfus was one of three candidates originally considered to succeed Admiral Richardson as Chief of the Bureau of Navigation. However, a fourth officer (Admiral C. W. Nimitz--who had been a late pencilled addition to the list) received the assignment. President Roosevelt is pictured as amenable to nominating Nimitz to head the Bureau of Navigation, but as adding "Well, what then do we do with 'Old Dutch' (Kalbfus)--I suppose we can send him to the War College."

²During the Second World War, Admiral Snyder served as a member of the General Board, 1941-1942; Naval Inspector General, 1942-1946, and in the Office of the Secretary of the Navy, 1946-1947, after which service he

Since he had left Newport only two years previous and had remained in contact with College activities during this interval, Admiral Kalbfus was well prepared to resume direction of the College. His most recent service with the fleet increased his understanding of current Navy operational policy and practice and provided valuable input to College planning. Within weeks after his return to Newport, the Second World War began. In the time ahead not only the College operation but its very existence would be affected by wartime developments and American reaction thereto.

2

The usual administrative problems of staff maintenance and physical facility utilization confronted Kalbfus upon his return. However, the beginning of hostilities in Europe directed his attention to other fields. During his second presidential tenure Kalbfus did not undertake any reorganization projects although the increasing scarcity of senior officers to fill staff billets and the difficulties of maintaining student officer enrollment at satisfactory levels constituted intensifying problems.

retired from active duty. He resided principally in the Washington (D.C.) area during his retirement years until his death at Bethesda (Md.) Naval Hospital, 3 December 1964, NWCA-RG 22.

The usual staff turnover occurred as the College prepared for the academic year 1939-1940. At this time the staff turnover percentage exceeded fifty.³ For the following academic year the figure would be even higher. At that time, 1940-1941, new officers appeared to head the three major departments while three officers rotated through the chief of staff position during the year. Navy operational needs were creating a new survival crisis for the College.

Unlike earlier years when the College president expended considerable effort to acquire new facilities or to modernize existing ones, other pressures now attracted presidential attention. In this regard, the rapidly decreasing enrollment called for drastic action. The thirty-eight students in the June (1941) classes created no roadblocks in the passageways of Luce Hall where seventy-eight students had moved only five years earlier.⁴ Indeed, even prior to his return, Admiral

³New department heads appeared at Operations (Captain Harold V. McKittrick in relief of Captain George H. Bowdey who moved up to Chief of Staff) and Intelligence (Captain Ralph S. Wentworth in relief of Captain Cary W. Magruder). Captain William S. Farber remained in charge of the Department of Administration. Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 3, 1939-1940, p. 1.

⁴The enrollment decline had been further accelerated by the simultaneous expansion occurring in the Army. By mid-1940 the Secretary of War advised of cancellation of orders for Army officers designated for study at the Naval War College because of "the large increase in requirements for Regular Army officers with troop units, etc." Secretary of War to Secretary of Navy, 16 July

Kalbfus recognized that an alternate program would have to be devised for the College. He began early to formulate proposals to realign the College program.

3

The Naval War College program took on added importance on 1 September 1939 when the Nazi land and air forces invaded Poland. The likelihood of war had been replaced by its reality. The possibility of American involvement understandably increased and the need to accelerate military and naval preparedness followed naturally.

Upon the outbreak of hostilities, Admiral Kalbfus suspended regular class routine to enable the student officers to assess developments in Europe. Professional staff, Senior, and Junior Class student officers were divided into groups with each group maintaining a running estimate of the situation from two points of view: the Axis and the Allies. Daily assemblies were held to discuss strategic and tactical options available to the contending powers. After several days the regular College program was resumed.⁵

1940, NA-RG 24, Box 573.

⁵Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 3, 1939-1940, p. 1.

The curriculum for the 1940 and 1941 Advanced classes contained little modification over preceding years. The high expectations held earlier for this group had almost evaporated by 1940. The shortages of qualified senior officers hampered its development. Class work was directed primarily toward development of a grand strategic plan for the United States in case of a war involving the integrity of the western hemisphere. Although the 1941 Advanced Class prospectus indicated an intensive study of a BLUE-ORANGE war, the class members expanded this assignment to include a possible war of greater proportions. Fifteen current events seminars were also offered for class members during the 1940-1941 academic year.⁶

Throughout its 1934-1941 existence, the Advanced Class followed a standardized operating procedure, based on individual and committee study and research. The Senior Member of the class assigned subjects for research to the individual class members who prepared papers containing the results of their investigations. These papers were examined by the entire class. Depending upon the viewpoints stated, the papers were synthesized into a final report containing majority and minority conclusions.

⁶Naval War College, "Prospectus of the Advanced Course Class of 1940-1941," 20 June 1940, NWCA-RG 2.

During 1939-1941 the Senior and Junior courses likewise remained substantially unmodified.⁷ This growing tendency to merge Senior and Junior class work intensified, thereby weakening the identity of the respective programs. Yet this disposition only highlighted the identity and survival crises confronting the College administration.

Operations problems presented to the Senior Class continued to be dominated by BLUE-ORANGE confrontations. Particularly noteworthy at this time was the continued "one-vs-one" approach to possible wartime conditions. Although the First and Second World Wars involved alliances, American national sentiment still disdained foreign entanglements. This belief influenced military and naval planning. While cooperation between Great Britain and the United States had begun in 1940 and would intensify in 1941, operations problems for the 1940 classes not only consisted of "one-vs-one" wars but two of them involved BLUE-RED (Great Britain) wars.⁸

One area of the curriculum that gathered strength throughout the interwar period was international law

⁷Indeed, the 1940-1941 program "was essentially the same as used last year." Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 4, 1940-1941, p. 3.

⁸Naval War College, Outline History, Supplement 3, 1939-1940, pp. 4-6.

studies. The annual deliberations, presided over by Professor George G. Wilson from 1902-1938, received unabated scholarly recognition. The annual "blue book," containing the product of the class work completed at the College during the year, was hailed by international law specialists throughout the world. Upon Wilson's retirement in 1938 he continued to present an annual lecture on selected aspects of international law while Professor Payson S. Wild of Harvard University took over Wilson's classroom duties.⁹

In his earlier years at the College Professor Wilson had played a major role in developing the "Instructions for the Navy of the United States Governing Maritime Warfare." Chief among the contents of this publication were provisions defining the rights of belligerents and neutrals, law of blockade, and contraband of war. This work required Wilson to consult frequently with the General Board as it integrated Navy perspectives on these issues with those of the State Department. The "instructions" (a basic responsibility of the Navy's Judge Advocate General's office) lost

⁹Naval War College, "Orientation Lecture on International Law," 16 December 1938, NWCA-RG 13. This standardized lecture did not vary during the last seven years of the interwar period.

some of their relevancy during the interwar period because of failure to maintain them in an up-to-date status. However, Wilson's work at the College in international law assured that updating of the instructions at a later date would not be of the same magnitude as the original drafting process.

Throughout the decade the student officers examined a variety of assigned international law problems, ranging in number from twelve to eighteen. In this regard, the student officer was assigned to study teams, investigated aspects of the problem under consideration, presented his solution to his study group which, at the conclusion of the individual presentations, prepared the team solution for incorporation in the annual publication.¹⁰

During the 1930 decade another curriculum element--the Correspondence Course--demonstrated sustained

¹⁰ Kalbfus to Rear Admiral Adolphus A. Andrews (Chief, Bureau of Navigation), 17 February 1936, NWCA-RG 2. At this time, Kalbfus indicated that the International Law course had been "a little bit unsatisfactory in the past." He acknowledged Wilson's invaluable role in maintaining the course, adding that his (Kalbfus) changes were "very simple and consisted mostly of giving more staff attention to the subject in the matter of pointing the student fairly into the desired channels of thought."

Kalbfus strongly recommended that the College staff should always have a member trained in International Law. He was pleased that a naval officer was currently enrolled at Harvard with this potential in mind.

strength until naval expansion began in earnest. Throughout the decade, the total enrollment varied between 645 in 1935; 1,023 in 1939, and 474 in 1941.¹¹ The latter decrease reflected the fact that establishment and/or expansion of naval bases, together with ever increasing ship commissionings, left little time for the naval officer to study naval warfare through individual effort.

Throughout the interwar period the major hallmark of the College curriculum continued to be the use of war gaming as the proving ground of concepts examined in the classroom. The completion of Pringle Hall in 1934 had provided greatly expanded facilities for war gaming exercises. The game board was also used regularly to demonstrate and analyze historical naval engagements. Through this medium, the battles of Jutland, Trafalgar, and other encounters unfolded in a vivid way before the student officers.¹²

¹¹Naval War College, Outline History, p. 412; Supplement 2, 1938-1939, p. 9; Supplement 4, 1940-1941, p. 5.

¹²The Naval War College war game facility has proven its value throughout almost the entire existence of the College. In the years immediately following the Second World War, the mounting differences between the speeds of surface and air units, the advances in detection and weaponry, and the reduced time available to student officers to play manually dependent games fostered the need for more modern simulation techniques. The present Navy Electronic Warfare Simulator (NEWS), located in Sims Hall, represents the College's response to this need.

The effectiveness of the war game, however, depended in large measure on presentation of circumstances closely akin to reality. In this regard, the increased capability of naval vessels underscored the need for this information at the College. While circumstances existed where current data was not on hand, for one reason or another, new naval capabilities also posed ongoing problems to the reality of war gaming. For example, the rapidly changing nature of naval aviation throughout the 1920's and 1930's constituted major problems to achieving realistic naval war gaming. Performance failures as well as successes complicated data utilization.¹³

The interwar years saw the Naval War College maintain its closest contact with the fleet. Not only did the College administration suggest problems to be considered by fleet commanders in the annual fleet exercises, but the results achieved were often returned to the College for additional assessment. In addition, as senior officers moved to the College at this time

¹³Chief of Staff (Captain Henry D. Cooke) to Commander C. E. Rosendahl, 2 July 1935, NWCA-RG 2. The loss of the airship MACON at this time led the College staff to drop airships temporarily from war gaming. Cooke stated that "it has been the general policy of the War College to avoid introducing into the games any types that were not actually in existence."

they were able to devise and test on the game board a plethora of theories and strategic-tactical situations which could not have received extended analysis elsewhere.

4

The usual panorama of lectures and staff presentations continued during the Kalbfus and Snyder presidencies. In contrast to the 1920's, however, the total annual number of presentations approximated eighty-five with staff presentations accounting for over sixty per cent of that total. This expansion of the lecture program in the late 1930's represented an increase of approximately twenty-five per cent over the average annual figure of the previous decade. While the guest lecturers and their topics remained relatively constant over this period, the staff presentations (recognizing the rising spirit of militarism in the world and the rearmament effort of the United States) reflected an increasing subject matter diversity.¹⁴

A number of speakers and topics maintained virtually staple status within the lecture program during

¹⁴This statement is based on information contained in Naval War College, Outline History, pp. 414-415, 431-432, 444-446; Supplement 1, 1937-1938, pp. 4-6; Supplement 2, 1938-1939, pp. 7-9; Supplement 3, 1939-1940, pp. 9-10; Supplement 4, 1940-1941, pp. 3-5.

the 1930's. There were the seemingly unvarying presentations of Professor Leland M. Goodrich as he considered the nature and bases of policy (in general and in the United States) and its application in the western hemisphere and throughout Europe and Asia. Captain Dudley W. Knox continued to urge development of an agency to coordinate formulation of our national strategy while Professor Albert E. Hindmarsh pushed for a realistic, thoroughly considered foreign policy to cover our relations with Europe and Asia. In the latter sphere he felt an increasing agreement with the assessment of an unidentified observer who, in viewing the Far East, had branded the interests of Japan in that area as vital, those of Great Britain as substantial, and those of the United States as sentimental.

As the 1930 decade concluded, wartime considerations gradually permeated the civilian lectures, the staff presentations having long since been devoted to developments in arms and armaments. The problem of neutrality was examined annually by a variety of speakers. The conditions in Europe, Asia, and Eastern Europe also received regular assessment (often by State Department personnel though faculty members from nearby and universities were similarly invited).

The tone of the civilian lectures mirrored a rising concern with the Axis' warlike measures and generally urged a stronger stand by the democracies. Indeed, Professor Bruce Hopper, a regular commentator on foreign affairs, invoked some sabre rattling when he declared that the United States should "scrap the old nonsense about 'pulling chestnuts' for Britain, scrap the false protection called the Neutrality Law, and get down to the business of saving this American system for the next generation by making an out-and-out alliance with Britain, France and Holland for a common policy in the western Pacific." More accurately, he believed that "world changes after the war may well make this another Renaissance but not necessarily from the cultural aspect."¹⁵

In preparing staff presentations for the academic year, a regular procedure had evolved during the inter-war period. Staff members were assigned topics to present, usually in the line of their military or naval specialties. Holdover staff members normally used the previous year's presentation (itself a distillation of the several preceding years) or, if the topic was an entirely new one or a previous one from a different viewpoint, new presentations were prepared. However,

¹⁵Bruce C. Hopper, "Soviet Russia: The New Balance in the Far East," 28 October 1938, NWCA-RG 14.

the latter instances were quite infrequent. A glimpse of the procedures is contained in the administrative instructions promulgated for the academic year 1938-1939.¹⁶

Upon assignment of a topic for presentation the staff member consulted with his reviewers for assistance in the preparation of his lecture. The prospective speaker was counseled by Captain Wilcox not to treat the assignment as a routine matter but as a "privilege and as the chief medium through which the College is enabled to inculcate in students sound views on practical warfare."¹⁷

Interestingly, while many of the subjects scheduled for presentation during 1938-1939 had been treated in previous years (several of them extending back for ten or more years), Captain Wilcox nevertheless believed that previous presentations (then available in the College library) "ought to be used without change except where revision will result in improvement." Staff lecturers were advised to assure broad and impartial coverage and not to incorporate their personal opinions. Nor were opinions of well-known experts to

¹⁶ Captain J. W. Wilcox, Jr., to Naval War College Staff, "Presentations for year 1938-1939," 14 May 1938, NWCA-RG 2.

¹⁷ Ibid.

be included, Wilcox noted, "unless careful analysis indicates that these views are sound, and applicable to the naval position of the United States." In time, it was hoped that the staff presentations would be honed to the point where their quality would "present a sound and comprehensive survey of the major aspects of naval warfare."¹⁸

A review of scheduled staff presentations during the 1934-1941 period confirms the increasing emphasis, in Navy thought, on submarines, aviation, and communications. Yet many of these presentations constituted recognition of the medium's existence rather than any meaningful absorption with its impact. Other essential elements of naval operations (joint and combined operations) continued to be underemphasized. Together with war gaming concentration on capital ships and support forces in a myriad of strategic and tactical situations, the staff lecture program contributed to the College's assessment of the nature of naval warfare.

The staff presentations, integrated with the lectures of guest military and naval specialists, reflected the problems of naval expansion compounded by scientific and technological advances.¹⁹ For example,

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹In assessing the impact of scientific and technological advances following the First World War,

an array of military speakers considered the submarine, its past, present, and future employments (with particular emphasis on improvements in operating capability, torpedoes, periscopes, power plants, and sound equipment). Although acceptance of the submarine into the naval family continued slowly throughout the inter-war period, College staff members in the late 1930's recognized that the submarine represented

a menace to men-of-war and merchant ships and imposes serious restrictions on their movements . . . the submarine hinders the enemy's freedom of movement but cannot secure freedom of movement of its own forces. It does not exercise sea power but pierces that of the enemy or rather renders control by the enemy more difficult.²⁰

Developments in naval aviation during the inter-war period reflect most cogently the impact of scientific

Stephen E. Ambrose maintains that fundamental changes were greater in naval warfare than land warfare. This condition meant "that admirals in 1939 had to consider much more in the way of technological change than did the generals." While Ambrose believes "that the major breakthrough of World War I was the development and extension of underseas warfare . . . the most influential changes during the 1919-1939 period "were the revolution in amphibious warfare and the coming of age of the aircraft carrier." Stephen E. Ambrose, "Seapower in World War I and II," NWC Review XXII (March, 1970), p. 34.

²⁰Naval War College, "The Employment of Submarines," 4 November 1937, NWCA-RG 13. The viewpoints expressed in this presentation did not alter materially during the 1934-1941 period.

and technical advances on naval warfare. Expanded capabilities by the air arm in performing reconnaissance, bombing, and fighting functions were only partially understood. The College staff presentation on naval aviation in the 1930's reflected this uncertainty, noting the influence of naval air developments on naval strategy and tactics, ship design, and College war games.²¹

²¹Naval War College, "The Employment of Aviation in Naval Warfare," 9 September 1937, NWCA-RG 13. This staff presentation, while noting that command of the air was "only possible through destruction of aircraft bases," recognized the impact of aviation on war gaming exercises:

It is unnecessary to open the controversial subject as to just how much damage one or two squadrons of airplanes may be able to inflict upon a strong vessel such as a battleship, and what will be our losses from anti-aircraft fire. Very frankly, no one knows the answers. Our maneuver rules give certain figures as to the probable percentage of hits, probable average damage made by one bomb, and probable effects of anti-aircraft fire. These rules, though made up after a study of target practice records, really are only a rough average of estimates made by a number of officers. We are not interested in discussing such questions as to whether or not the advent of the airplane will destroy the value of battleships or any other class of naval vessel. We do feel that as a tactical weapon, the airplane is here to stay, that it will modify tactics and thus influence construction.

This presentation remained substantially unaltered until 1940. At that time, the early experiences with military and naval aviation in the Second World War spurred the College staff to reassess thoroughly the employment of aviation.

During this period naval communications also achieved significant progress. Scientific and technological developments in this field permeated command, strategic and tactical considerations.²² In furtherance of Navy interest the Director of Naval Communications addressed the College staff and student officers. He underscored the need for efficient and effective communications in all phases of operational planning and control. This obligation would require naval commanders to be well-versed in the capabilities and limitations of existing communications systems. Furthermore, the need for coordination, timing of effort, and speed of execution remained as vital in naval communications as in other phases of the profession.²³

During the 1934-1941 period the routine of readings, lectures, staff presentations, and thesis writing was highlighted by a comprehensive staff presentation on naval warfare. This undertaking analyzed the nature and forms of naval warfare; employment of naval

²²In the 1930's advances in radio and voice radio (radio telephone) had a marked effect on naval communications. Although both media had been introduced into the fleet, only voice radio facilities had been installed generally throughout the fleet by 1940. The advent of the Second World War would accelerate development of radar capabilities.

²³Rear Admiral Leigh Noyes, "Naval Communications," 16 August 1940, NWCA-RG 14.

weapons; war command; naval campaigns, and land warfare. Operations Department staff members prepared individual segments of the general topics which, in total, represented a synthesis of contemporary thought on naval warfare.

While this presentation included current Navy policy and practice, it revealed the fate of the College program which Sims had described years earlier as being the study of the principles of war. By 1940, Captain H. V. McKittrick, head of the Operations Department, would observe that the College no longer stressed the principles of war "because of the wide variation, both in numbers of them and in the manner of presenting them, by different writers."²⁴

5

Thesis writing continued to be a staple product in the College program during the 1934-1941 period. The College staff believed that preparation of a thesis represented a profitable synthesizing exercise.²⁵

²⁴Captain H. V. McKittrick, "Nature of Naval Warfare," 2 July 1940, NWCA-RG 13.

²⁵Naval War College, "Directive for Thesis, Senior Class of 1941," 25 January 1941, NWCA-RG 2. The thought underlying preparation of the thesis was "to demonstrate familiarity with the foreign policies of the United States. Knowledge of the inception, formulation, growth, evolution, and present-day status of these policies is an essential part of the equipment of every naval officer . . . "

Although the same thesis topic was assigned to all members of a class, some minor variations in emphasis were permitted. The topics varied from year to year but were frequently repeats of an earlier year. Since the student officers had undergone similar learning experiences throughout the year, the completed theses reflected a striking uniformity in structure, content, and philosophy.

The general procedures for thesis preparation remained unaltered through the years. Topics were assigned; guidelines were prepared, and bibliographies were provided. Fifty to sixty pages constituted recommended length (though rarely achieved until well into the 1930's). A staff member read the thesis but assigned no grade. If the thesis received an "outstanding" mark from the first reader it was reassigned to a second staff reader for concurrence. This situation occurred most infrequently.

The Senior Class theses of this period treated of the relationship between national policy and strategy, the foreign relations of the United States, and the problems in implementation of national policy throughout the world. Junior Class theses, on the other hand, considered strategic factors in selected episodes in world maritime history; development,

present, and future trends in various ship types, and the naval battle. As the 1930's concluded tactical considerations received less emphasis in Junior Class thesis assignments.

The Senior Class theses from the mid-1930's onward reflect the Navy's involvement in the expanding rearmament program, intensified concern for Japanese expansion in the Far East, and the need to protect America's worldwide interests in the light of public neutrality and isolationist dispositions. While these themes permeated student officer theses during the interwar period, the unsettled world conditions in the 1930's accelerated the Navy's desire to assure an effective readiness posture.

In his 1935 Senior Class thesis Commander M. S. Bennion interpreted the magnitude of deteriorating world conditions as a warning to the United States to prepare for an unlimited war. A conflict of this magnitude, he warned, stressed the need that Americans learn well the lessons of the First World War. In particular, Bennion believed that the current rearmament program assured that America would be prepared for any eventuality. One lesson which had gone largely unlearned within the naval and military service, in Bennion's estimation, was the need to provide for a

"unity of command" in assigned missions. An invigorated Joint Board represented a hopeful sign.²⁶

As Hitler and Franco moved against established governments in 1936 and as the Japanese continued to tread the China mainland, the Senior Class theses (as represented by Commander R. F. Reifsnyder and Captain R. K. Turner), called on Americans to discard their apathy toward Europe and Asia and to encourage the return to more liberal government systems in those areas of the world.²⁷

One year later Captains Isaac Campbell Kidd and R. M. Brainard agreed that while rearmament was the spirit of the day, Americans would be wise not to slacken in their desire to strengthen their national posture. A classmate, Captain J. M. Smeallie, in examining the impact of national interests on foreign policy formulation, received a mark of "outstanding" for his analysis. This was the only thesis of those now available at the Naval War College Archives to be so graded.²⁸

²⁶Commander M. S. Bennion, Class of 1935 Thesis: "The Relationship between the National Policy and Strategy of . . . in the World War and its Lessons for us Today," 6 April 1935, NWCA-RG 12.

²⁷Commander R. F. Reifsnyder, Class of 1936 Thesis: "The Foreign Relations of the United States," 30 March 1936, ibid. Captain R. K. Turner, ibid.

²⁸Captain Isaac C. Kidd, Class of 1937 Thesis: "Foreign Policies and International Relations of the

By 1938 world conditions had worsened; the outlook for peace had clouded. Student officers increasingly urged development of a strong foreign policy to undergird the rearmament effort. Yet they offered no substantive policy proposals. Captain R. L. Ghormley could only agree that Secretary of State Cordell Hull's statement ("We'll do whatever seems to us to be a good idea at the time.") represented about "as true a forecast of our future foreign policy as can be made." Another 1938 class member, Commander C. H. McMorris, noted that "the United States was gradually moving toward international cooperation." This tendency was considered laudable not only in the light of neutrality legislation and isolationist thought but also because American leadership was essential "to prevent the complete collapse of the social and economic structure of the western world."²⁹

A third member of the 1938 Senior Class, Commander L. D. McCormick, concentrated on American policy and strategy in the Pacific ocean area, concluding

United States," 1 March 1937, ibid. Captain R. M. Brainard, ibid. Captain J. M. Smeallie, ibid.

²⁹Captain R. L. Ghormley, Class of 1938 Thesis: "Present Trends in the Foreign Policy of the United States" (Selected areas: Pacific, Europe and Near East . . .), 16 April 1938, ibid. Captain C. H. McMorris, ibid.

pointedly "therefore we must get ready for hostilities with Japan, and must lay the groundwork for obtaining assistance in this event." McCormick viewed Great Britain and her dominions as "probably wanting more help than she can give." While Holland and France were seen as possible allies, McCormick considered Russia as "a natural ally against Japan but will probably not become a formal one."³⁰

In 1939 the lines between the Axis powers and the free world were clearly drawn. Captain O. C. Badger shifted his consideration of the traditional Navy interest in Pacific affairs to Latin America where he believed the American emphasis on a strong, national defense (combined with increasing Pan-Americanism, seen in the "Good Neighbor" policy) represented the strongest basis for solving the problems confronting the United States in that area.³¹

The outbreak of war in 1939 accelerated the rearmament program. It also increased possibilities of United States involvement. The advent of hostilities brought an increasing measure of pragmatism and idealism into student officer theses. The government was

³⁰Commander L. D. McCormick, ibid.

³¹Captain O. C. Badger, Class of 1939 Thesis: "Conflicts between the Policies of the United States concerning the Western Hemisphere and the Policies of other Powers," 19 April 1939, ibid.

urged to work harder to unify the national spirit, to support nations friendly to our national policies, and to maintain the present rearmament pace.

As the trend of events turned against the Allies in the first year of the war, student theses also reflected growing concern for the direction of American foreign policy. In this regard, Captain Jonas Ingram examined American foreign policy and its substance in the light of prevailing world conditions. Captain Ingram believed that our policy in Central and South American was justifiably suspect; that current United States policy required a greater military establishment than then extant. While the United States should refrain from participation in the present war, he believed the United States would become involved eventually. The type of aggression applied against the United States would determine the nature and extent of her involvement. In concluding his thesis, Captain Ingram disdained forecasting the trend of American foreign policy, noting "it would be egregious for an amateur in the field of international politics to commit himself on the future."³²

³² Captain Jonas Ingram, Class of 1940 Thesis: "The Foreign Policies and International Relations of the United States," 20 April 1940, ibid.

A 1940 classmate, Commander C. G. Moore, repeated many of Ingram's observations while adding that "the United States will continue to back Britain morally and materially. When and if our manpower is needed, we will, of course, throw it in." Commander Moore believed the chance of American involvement in the Second World War to be more likely in the Far East than in Europe. He re-echoed his classmates in urging construction of a strong navy to implement a modernized naval policy.³³

With the Axis powers firmly in control of central Europe, the main theme of student officer theses related foreign policy development to current world conditions. Commander R. W. Bates noted that American foreign policy in the Far East was static, having been virtually unchanged over the past four years. He believed the isolationist tendency in the nation might intensify if the advantages of non-involvement outweighed other considerations. Yet, if the chance existed to defeat the Axis and if Americans realized "that their principles are more important than life itself," they might go to war "when they believed with the Romans of old 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.'"³⁴

³³ Commander C. G. Moore, ibid.

³⁴ Commander R. W. Bates, Class of 1941 Thesis: "The Foreign Policies and International Relations of the United States," 26 April 1941, ibid.

As the Second World War unfolded in Europe, American military, naval and political leaders observed and assessed its ominous implications. These leaders knew that the United States might well be drawn into the struggle although the circumstances leading to such involvement remained speculative. The rising tensions in Europe in the late 1930's hastened Navy mobilization planning. The existing plans and their concomitant options related to the future of the Naval War College. When the United States entered the First World War the College was in the process of consolidating its reputation. However, this process was not sufficiently developed to sustain an independent or continuous operation once America actively entered the war. The College was placed in a deactivated status and its resources directed primarily to naval district activities.

As a result of naval planning after the First World War, the Bureau of Navigation decided again to discontinue College operations in the advent of another major war. As the intensity of the Second World War increased, Admiral Kalbfus sought to modify the decision to discontinue College operations in case of

future military mobilization. Writing to the Bureau of Navigation in 1940, Kalbfus decried the 1917 decision which had resulted not only in misunderstanding between naval district personnel and the naval training station administration in matters involving seniority, but in other improvised measures (the diversion of the College building to emergency uses as well as the housing of families of naval reserve officers in Luce Hall) which provided little guidance for the future.³⁵

Admiral Kalbfus believed strongly that the experiences of the previous deactivation should not be repeated. He emphasized that a long-range postwar view must be maintained, adding that he did "not contemplate with satisfaction the possible overrunning of these College buildings by personnel not interested in the future or well-being of the College, because of the priceless volumes contained in the library, the mass of material contained in the archives, the College records, and the equipment peculiar to the exercise of its functions." Kalbfus maintained that previous restoration expenses should not be forgotten. Furthermore, "there should be continuity in the records and, even though the major portion of the staff and civilian

³⁵ Kalbfus to Chief, Bureau of Navigation, 27 April 1940, NA-RG 24, Box 572.

force might be required elsewhere, there should be enough of these left at the College to ensure no break when its activities are resumed . . . " In particular, the civiliam force (because of its special qualifications and long identification with the College) should be disrupted only as an "extreme emergency."³⁶

Admiral Kalbfus' recommendations were received in Washington by friendly ears and receptive minds. In time, the Bureau of Navigation (headed by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz) announced that the Naval War College course work as presently constituted would be suspended on 15 May 1941 for the duration of the present emergency. However, in substitution, there would be established a Command course and a Preparatory Staff course. These courses were to run concurrently, each approximately five months in length.³⁷

As planned, the Command course would cover most of the material then included in the Senior course. Projected contents would include the fundamentals of command, strategical and tactical problems, planning and the formulation of directives, and international law studies. The course would be available to all officers of the line and staff of the regular Navy

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Chief of Bureau of Navigation to All Ships and Stations, 25 March 1941, NA-RG 24, Box 573.

with six or more years of commissioned service. Army, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard officers, who had received approval from their respective department heads, would also be eligible for enroilment.³⁸

The Preparatory Staff course, comparable to the present Junior course, would be designed to promote familiarity with staff procedure, the elements of strategy and tactics, and international law. Unlike the Junior course, the Preparatory Staff course would be intended primarily for approximately fifty naval reserve officers of and above the rank of lieutenant, junior grade, who had already seen some active naval service.³⁹

College administrative plans called for retention of as much of the peacetime operating structure as possible. As a result, prescribed readings, academic lectures and staff presentations, and war gaming--all permeated with the "applicatory" method--would be retained. Also, successful completion of either course assured the student officer of partial completion of the requirements for promotion to the next highest rank.

Shortly after his departure from the College for duty in Washington, Kalbfus wrote a strong note to the Chairman of the General Board urging that planning for

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

the postwar Naval War College should recognize its vital role in preparing naval officers for higher command. While he was consoled "that those presently holding the high naval commands have had the opportunity of attending the College," he was nonetheless dismayed that the majority of officers below them had not had the benefits of the Naval War College experience. The gradual decrease in Junior Class attendance during the 1930's had resulted in only ten per cent of the present commanders and lieutenant commanders having had "the opportunity of studying and absorbing the fundamentals of warfare under expert guidance and while free from administrative cares." Kalbfus readily understood the reason for the drop in attendance ("the increased threat from abroad, the operational, technical and administrative demands became more and more insistent while the regular line officer strength remained practically fixed")--but urged strenuously that in the postwar years "the continuing study of war" not be neglected.⁴⁰

Another administrative problem that reappeared in 1940 was the identity and status of the senior line officer in the Narragansett Bay area. After the First

⁴⁰Naval War College, Staff Study, The Naval War College, ibid., pp. D1-D9.

World War, Admiral Sims had sought to assure that the College would maintain its distinct independence and that its president would not be encumbered with additional duties. He successfully freed the College president from any role in naval district operations and facilitated concentration on the College's primary mission.⁴¹

With the advent of the Second World War, the Navy intensified examination of its present and future command structure. The Chief of Naval Operations asked Admiral Kalbfus to submit his proposal on the organizational structure for the local area that would most effectively meet the needs of the Navy.

In his response, Kalbfus revealed his intense desire to maintain the College in an active status and his recognition that this objective might be best achieved through assumption of additional command responsibilities by the College president. While this latter conviction ran counter to beliefs of some of his predecessors in the College presidency, Kalbfus urged that the College president be designated Commandant, Naval Base, Newport. However, he urged that "the additional duties incident to the operation of

⁴¹Secretary of Navy to Sims, 23 May 1919, NWCA-RG 2.

the Naval Base would not be the concern of College personnel other than the President himself." Admiral Kalbfus confessed that while reasons advanced earlier for the removal of additional command responsibilities from the College president had been justified, he did not see now why the president "should not shoulder additional duties when the national interests so require."⁴²

Admiral Kalbfus' position in this matter reflected his conviction that a principal way to assure the College's continued operation was to justify the president's retention in the area through assumption of additional duties.

At this time the Navy had made no definite decision on continued operation of the College during the current mobilization thrust. Admiral Kalbfus, therefore, sought to offset possible curtailment of College activities through retention of the president's "presence" in the Narragansett Bay area. While Kalbfus did not expect the College structure to continue unchanged throughout mobilization and possible wartime conditions, he maintained that in accordance with his

⁴²Kalbfus to Chief of Naval Operations, 31 December 1940, NWCA-RG 2.

earlier recommendations on continued College operations, a president with reduced duties would be in a good position to assume other local command responsibilities.⁴³

The graduation ceremonies in May, 1941, marked the termination of the College's interwar program. In the traditionally brief exercises, Admiral Kalbfus, prior to introducing Secretary of Navy Frank Knox, warned the graduating student officers, staff members, and guests that "the student of warfare and even the observer who views the march of these portentous events dispassionately, if there be any such, cannot fail to be profoundly impressed with the thoroughness, the swiftness, the precision, of the warfare of the present day." While Kalbfus counselled that "history teaches us it is wise to forestall attack rather than await it," he was gratified that the College had been able to turn out another group of "experienced and responsible officers."⁴⁴

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Naval War College, 16 May 1941, NWCA-RG 16. Although Admiral Kalbfus was placed on the Retired List, 1 December 1941, he remained on active duty at the College. In November, 1942, he was transferred to the General Board, Washington, D.C.; in July, 1944, he was appointed to the Court of Inquiry on the Pearl Harbor attack with additional duty as Director of Naval History. He was relieved of all active duty, 22 May 1946, returning to Newport where he died on 6 September 1956.

With the conclusion of the graduation ceremonies, the graduates joined the ranks of approximately 1,400 officers who had completed the resident courses during the interwar years and the majority of whom (through successful performances in the highest naval commands of the Second World War)⁴⁵ would bring undying glory to the Navy and its War College, and a rousing "Well Done" from Admiral Stephen Bleeker Luce and his followers.

⁴⁵Vice Admiral George C. Dyer, "Let the Figures Speak," Shipmate, 20 (September, 1957), p. 3. Dyer notes that "at the start of World War II every Flag Officer of the Navy qualified to command at sea, except one, was a graduate of the United States Naval War College."

CHAPTER X

EPILOGUE

If 1917 completed the Naval War College's "Age of Adolescence," 1941 concluded its "Age of Maturation." These experiences, combined with those of the Second World War, would provide the foundation for the College's postwar "Age of Sophistication." During the period 1919-1941 successive College administrations had guided the institution through various turbulences caused by reactivation, disarmament efforts, public apathy and opposition, economic depression, naval expansion, and finally, rising worldwide militarism. These forces affected Navy Department policy and planning which, in turn, established constraints on the College administration. After 1935, certain of these forces (particularly international political and economic instability) increased in magnitude and velocity, thereby creating distinct challenges to the College's viability.

When the College program was reorganized in 1941 the preceding twenty-two years represented a

preparatory period for the Second World War. Most major commands in the Navy during that conflict would be held by officers who had completed the Naval War College resident courses. The question naturally arises as to the effectiveness of the College in preparing Navy thought and action for the Second World War.

At the time postwar operations were resumed in 1919, the College administration needed to delineate its mission, to establish a workable organizational structure, to formulate a course of study incorporating recent military, naval, and technological experiences, and to project vital professional trends.

It is a truism that all organizations, regardless of specific nature, are goal-seeking organisms. Organizational functions are performed in order to achieve some goal, some end, some objective. Indeed, within each organization there exists a multiplicity of objectives. In this regard the Naval War College was no exception.

In formulation of the College objectives the usual legal and social constraints placed upon all educational institutions were buttressed by Navy Department and individual bureau policy. These factors affected delineation of the College objectives.

Although General Order No. 325 of 6 October 1884 establishing the Naval War College set out its mission (or function) solely to provide "an advanced course of profession study for naval officers," Admiral Luce and other College protagonists added specificity to this basic objective: in particular, "to raise naval warfare from the empirical stage to the dignity of a science." This reaction was understandable since institutional goals cannot be adequately described by a single objective. Multiple objectives are essential to understand inter- and intra-institutional relationships.

Beginning in the 1920's, however, the College objective gradually evolved from earlier "basic professional training" to "preparation for higher command." This emerging statement reflected a synthesis of the 1919 report of the Knox-King-Pye board description of the College program ("to provide a confirmation, summary and adequate familiarity with the higher advanced elements of the profession, chiefly those principles which govern in the administration, operations, and functions of forces and fleets, in readiness for prospective employment as flag officers") and the statement of the Taussig board approximately ten years later ("the chief purpose of the [College] instruction is to assist in the preparation of officers for command

duties in time of war and for duties on the staff of flag officers afloat").

While Admiral Luce believed that the mission of the Naval War College should be directed "to the study of naval history, naval strategy and tactics, the law of nations, and academic discussions of all conceivable types of naval problems of war," Admiral Sims initially viewed the College's primary objective to be "the study of the principles of warfare, their application, and the training of student officers' minds to a high degree of precision and rapidity in the correct application of these principles."

Although Admiral C. S. Williams appears to have been the first Naval War College president to state formally the College mission as "to assist in the preparation of naval officers for high command in war," the Navy Department (in the mid-1920's) maintained that "the mission of the War College is to furnish a medium whereby naval officers may in peace time study the conduct of naval warfare and the art of command thereto."

Admiral Pratt, on the other hand, preferred to avoid terse statements of the College mission. In any discussion of the College mission he invariably harked back to the mission as envisioned by the board

convened to investigate the feasibility of establishing the College. This statement appealed to Pratt because of its thoroughness in presenting the College's multiple objectives.

Again in the late 1920's, the emphasis on the College mission for the balance of the interwar period reverted to "training for higher command." The continual shift in the definition of the College mission during the 1920's perhaps reveals a confusion over whether the institution sought to develop a "product" or a "process." In the next decade concern for the College mission per se generally subsided.

Throughout the period 1919-1941, the mission of the College gradually evolved as preparation for an undefined higher command which could be either ashore or afloat. The College program, however, was directed almost exclusively to higher command positions afloat. While the latter admittedly represented the College's raison d'etre, there remained vital support functions performed ashore at high command echelons for which the College provided only minimal consideration. In particular, the essential (though unglamorous) logistics function received an emphasis miniscule to its true importance.

Yet the College mission of the period judiciously included the infinitive "to assist." This

construction implied recognition that development of high command proficiency was not the exclusive province of the Naval War College. Other naval agencies were also involved.

Since education and training are continuous experiences, it is virtually impossible to quantify the impact of any experience occurring during this process. Attendance at the Naval War College was normally but one stop on a continuous career program that contained a series of vital duty assignments, ashore and afloat, all of which contributed in varying degrees to the totality of the officer's proficiency. Indeed, then as now, some officers remained unconvinced (for personal or professional reasons) of the importance of the College experience in preparing them for "successful" naval careers.

During the College operations before the First World War, the problem of organizational structure or design possessed no real immediacy. This condition resulted from the relatively small number of staff and student officers (often less than twenty-five members) and the absence of specifically identifiable classes (i.e., Advanced, Senior, and Junior).

Admiral Sims' organizational design had been basically predicated upon substantially enlarged class

and staff memberships. Organizational design (as a prelude to a workable span of control) became necessary. In his approach to the problem, Admiral Sims merely identified the areas of competency he envisioned as essential to senior officer professional capability (command, strategy and tactics) and departmentalized them. Each academic department was considered equally important although staff memberships in Command and Tactics outnumbered those in Strategy. An administration department was also established at this time.

This organizational design remained unchanged until Pratt's reshuffle in 1926. At this time Pratt admittedly reordered the College organization to resemble the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. The three departments were renamed with the logistics function receiving separate identity. Pratt's organizational design was redrawn by Admiral Pringle whose departmentalization remained substantially unchanged in number and title through 1934. The following year Admiral Kalbfus undertook a mild organizational revision, reversing this design for the next academic year. Major departmentalization remained unchanged until 1941 when new wartime programs dictated revision.

A basic problem in organizational design is determination of which activities to group together, at what organizational level, and under whose immediate supervision. The College's organizational design was a complex one involving several important independent variables: (1) the nature and physical location of the College operation (the Newport location possessed advantages as well as disadvantages); (2) the degree to which decision responsibilities may be decentralized (encouraged by the College policy and relatively modest staff and student officer memberships though constrained by the nature of Department, bureau and College bureaucracy); (3) the coordinative problems at different organizational levels (extant both intra-institutionally and with the Department, bureaus, and major commands); (4) the general tendency toward uneconomic duplication of work (plagued the College program in the late 1930's), and (5) the balancing of work loads (a consideration not extensively treated in the College's administrative archives).

A salient feature of most organizational designs is frequent change. This restructuring is generally necessitated by changing operating conditions. In the case of the Naval War College, programs expanded, enrollments increased, while physical plant capability

compressed. Yet these developments did not necessarily initiate administrative decisions to reorganize. Most frequently this decision apparently resulted from new perceptions of important subject matter (logistics) or presidential convictions regarding vital institutional functions (research, war plans, etc.). An examination of the functions assigned to newly created departments invariably reveals no major changes. Only the department title changes. The changes instituted by Admiral Kalbfus in 1935 are a case in point. His "Education Department" differed only slightly in assigned duties from the 1934 "Operations Department." Other examples are citable of the semantical gymnastics that accompanied most changes in organizational design in the interwar period.

Admiral Sims' organizational design for the Naval War College represented a satisfactory start. Redesign was to be expected; institutional stagnation was to be avoided. Consequently, few of the interwar College presidents felt restrained from "tinkering" with the structure. Such propensity may well be endemic with most administrators who generally have firm preconceptions of how organizations should be designed, have strong reluctance to accept anything as given, and have accepted the premise that all administrators, in addition to other managerial virtues, are

innovative and creative. When these dispositions exist in large proportion, change (necessary or perfunctory) usually follows. Then, too, professional practices invariably preclude acceptance and maintenance of the status quo, irrespective of its success. The College presidents of the period, like their brethren in corporate management, were expected to be leaders not custodians. "Making way" was applauded even if closer examination might reveal it was merely "making waves."

Successful organizational designs depend, in large measure, upon the manner in which available physical plant facilities and staff personnel are utilized. The eight College presidents of the interwar period were understandably faced with these problems which varied in regularity and intensity.

The physical facilities available to the College administrations of this period varied in adequacy depending upon the intensity of utilization. The latter factor was largely conditioned by the number of, and enrollments in, the resident College classes. While it is true that plant adequacy was maintained during the interwar period through the persistent supplications for funds by successive College presidents, at no time was the viability of the College program seriously threatened for any appreciable length of time.

The establishment of the Junior and Advanced courses (along with generally increasing class enrollments) did create temporary space shortages, but the addition of Pringle Hall in 1934 ameliorated general space problems. Almost concurrently, naval expansion reduced the number of naval officers available to attend the College. This condition reversed the earlier trend of over-utilization of space to one of under-utilization. The growing problem created by this shift posed management problems previously unencountered. The decision to reorganize the College program in 1941 eliminated the threat of deactivation, assured continued plant utilization, provided an ongoing responsive program, and facilitated postwar institutional reconversion.

Within the physical plant, the College library represented a major support to the instructional program. During the interwar period, this activity suffered from chronic space shortages which consistently hampered its operation. Each president lamented the frustrations engendered by storage shortages and the impact on library utilization rates. Not until 1938 was additional space available. Acquisitions continued throughout this period. However, space shortages placed severe limitations on the

library's retention program, resulting in only a modest increase in total holdings between the years 1919 and 1941.

The Naval War College presidents were likewise concerned with maintaining a stable, competent staff. Furthermore, since students were not recruited, the individual president was involved in maintaining (and increasing, where possible) student enrollment. Staff and student officer matters, therefore, inhered in each other.

Selecting staff personnel with essential professional qualifications to fill the College staff positions involved dealing with a number of complex and interesting variables which defy precise definition. This condition makes impossible the use of formalized mathematical models in the study of human inputs. At the Naval War College, the staff consisted of officer personnel, civil service and enlisted personnel. Despite the essentiality of the latter two categories, lack of evidence prevents other than a routine recognition, rarely formalized, of their contributions to operational continuity and effectiveness.

In many ways the problem of staff competency closely resembled the task confronting administrators everywhere. Principal considerations in this acquisitional process included: formal education and training;

experience requirements, mental qualities, emotional and personal characteristics, and social characteristics. However, the homogeneity of the peacetime officer corps assured a high degree of uniformity, thereby often reducing the selection process to the candidate's general "service reputation" and his "availability" (a state determined by many factors, personal and professional).

Staff acquisition problems in the 1920's were generally minimized because of the decreasing number of available major command billets, an increasing personal desire to participate in the College experience, and the growing recognition of the future professional benefits of such experience. Furthermore, the staffing task was facilitated through appointment of officers from the ranks of those completing the Senior course. These officers frequently welcomed the opportunity to extend their Newport stay since it continued the happy blend of professional development and personal (including familial) satisfaction.

Beginning in the mid-1930's, the staffing task at the College became more complex. The number of officers available for staff duty, regardless of location, decreased when an expanding naval establishment provided an increasing number of attractive higher

command billets. These circumstances affected the availability of "preferred" officers. These conditions, combined with an irritating Department tendency to detach staff and student officers prior to completion of their College duty, vexed many College presidents.

Student officer enrollment, another institutional resource, generally grew during most of the 1919-1941 period. However, the problem became acute in the mid-1930's as the College resident courses, particularly the Junior course, experienced substantial decreases. Indeed, the problem magnified to such an extent that by 1941 the College existence was threatened.

Every administration must develop a number of decision strategies for use in achieving designated organizational objectives. At the Naval War College the limits of these strategies were dictated by Navy Department policy and available College resources. At the College level, the decision strategies on efficient use of available personnel, facilities, and financial resources were embodied in the College program. Here, through determination of program content (specifically reflected in strategic and tactical exercises, international law studies, staff presentations, guest lecturers, and student theses), the College sought "to assist in the preparation of naval officers for high command."

Throughout the interwar period, the College program sought for responsiveness to the needs of the Navy. This demand was reflected in the ongoing problem of assuring that the program reflected the naval leaders' present environment. Within a context of battleship dominance, the experiences of the First World War, accelerated changes in military and naval technology, and blurred professional foresight, the program emphasis gradually turned on naval strategy and tactics. Within this general framework, tactical considerations eventually received a disproportionate accentuation. Other vital operating areas (i.e., logistics, joint operations, submarine and amphibious warfare) received either sporadic attention or benign neglect. Incorporation of aviation capabilities in the College study program was hindered by the lack of firm data as well as the rapid technological changes taking place within the naval air arm. On the other hand, international law studies at the College maintained a high level of professionalism throughout the 1919-1941 years. Blessed by the presence of an outstanding scholar, the international law studies (and resulting publications) received increasing acclaim throughout professional circles. Achievements in this area added to the solidarity of the College reputation.

While the "applicatory method" encouraged a realistic approach to the College studies, many of the staff presentations, guest lectures, and student theses failed to sustain a high level of professional scholarship. In any extended examination of these works, the elementary level of analysis is readily apparent. Many of the staff presentations were designed either to introduce the student officer to the subject, to expand his basic understanding, or to reveal the current state of the art (or science). The staff presentations engendered more interest among the student officers because of their direct relationship to their professional careers. The civilian guest speakers invariably included much historical background in their presentations. For example, lecturers in economics, international law, psychology, and sociology could not assume that the class possessed a subject-matter familiarity comparable to that brought to naval subjects. Yet, through repetitive themes, the impact of the lectures on the student officers is mirrored in the extent to which lecture excerpts are cited in student theses.

The student theses, on the other hand, cannot actually be considered as fulfilling the required definition: "to maintain a given proposition by argument

or by original research." These studies are unduly honored with the title "thesis." While research papers may make distinct contributions in an academic program, this condition may not have existed at the College. The large amount of time spent at the war game board, the problem of access to library resources, the student officer's inexperience in formal rhetoric, and the passivity frequently inspired by the lecture method may well have placed intangible constraints on reflective thought. In this regard, copies of lectures, staff presentations, and student theses retained in the College archives reveal considerable duplication of thought.

Permeating the entire College program was reliance upon war gaming exercises. The latter constituted a distinct learning experience for student and staff officers. These exercises differed substantially from the various fleet exercises, thereby broadening the professional skills of hundreds of officers. As the interwar period unfolded, the totality of the war game experience was impeded by several factors: insufficient data to develop truly realistic game rules; general avoidance of problems involving a variety of political alliances, and an increasingly disproportionate emphasis on tactical considerations. These debilitating conditions were compounded by an American foreign policy that advocated either strong unilateral

action or no action at all (fostered by persistent neutral, pacifistic and isolationistic sentiments). Yet the acceptance by most naval leaders of the doctrine of battleship dominance in the naval battle of the future did not mean that the College program was oblivious to major changes occurring within the naval profession. While the program may have lacked totality, it did not promote myopia. National political, economic and social climates must be recalled; external factors beyond College control must not be overlooked.

The nature of managerial control frequently determines organizational success. Effective control provides continuous input to the planning process. As a result, provisions must be made to evaluate the extent to which managerial strategies have contributed to the achievement of institutional objectives. If the latter are vague and imprecise, determination of performance standards will be difficult.

In most educational institutions, the assessment process centers on a grading system, student evaluations, department reports, and committee studies. While the Naval War College legitimately disdained use of a formal grading system, the College president did employ other measures. In combination, however, it is

impossible to determine the degree to which these inputs assisted in the preparation of naval officers for positions of high command. A profusion of institutional studies would await another day.

In actuality, the responsibilities of the College administration were set out in existing Department regulation; in practice, the Department, Chief of Naval Operations, and Bureau of Navigation granted the College president considerable administrative freedom. Consequently formal status reports of College operations to Department superiors appear to have been submitted most infrequently. This condition may have resulted from the many personal contacts between the officers in Washington, Newport, and elsewhere.

The principal College report of the interwar period appears to have consisted of an annual report, prepared by the president, and submitted to the Chief of Naval Operations for inclusion in the annual reports of the Department. The College reports, many of which are retained at the National Archives, consist of 2-3 pages, primarily of figures attendant to the annual enrollment. These reports never viewed the College operation in its totality. A search of pertinent holdings in the National Archives or Naval War College Archives failed to uncover any document akin

to an official assessment of the College's effectiveness. The Taussig board report of 1929 represents the principal evidence that the College program ever received an evaluation beyond the acuity of "rule-of-thumb" estimates.

Institutional images are frequently leadership projections. The smaller the institution the more likely this phenomenon may develop. Where existent, this condition results from a more personalized span of managerial control, operating within recognized legal and social constraints. The presence of this phenomenon at the Naval War College was influenced by the clear delineation of line and staff responsibilities, the status of rank, and the officer's orientation toward action. As a result, leadership expectations at Newport followed established lines, modified most infrequently by the presence of a dynamic personality. For the fact remains that the ultimate success of the College program was largely determined by influences and forces beyond the control of College president.

The principal contributions of the Naval War College to naval preparedness may be largely attributed to the strong leadership exerted by Admiral William S. Sims during the College's crucial reactivation in 1919 and in the years immediately following. His task was

facilitated by a cooperative Department organization. Sims, alert to the original institutional objectives propounded by Admiral Luce and buttressed by his personal convictions and experiences, knew the postwar College program would have to accommodate to a world of rapid change, spawned by the First World War. As a result of his efforts, the College operation was strongly established and equally sustained by his successors.

Admiral Sims' professional stature contributed markedly to his success at Newport. This influence was sufficient to command respect even when opposed. Therefore, he was able to accomplish College goals that eluded most of his successors. The several officers who followed Sims in the College presidency were highly capable naval officers, equally devoted supporters of the College concept, and firmly committed to its further development. Yet, in retrospect, it does not appear that any of them equaled Sims' contribution to the College (either in delineation of its mission or in development of its program and resources). The other interwar presidents were partially hampered, however, by their abbreviated tours and by the established direction of the program. Consequently, they were more apt to tinker than to innovate. They worked

to assure that there would be no backsliding in the College program or reputation. Since no additional programs were conceived beyond those proposed by Sims, and no physical plant or educational resources were developed beyond those which had been foreseen by Sims, his successors in the interwar period largely appear to have been conservators and custodians.

If there is an exception to the above generalizations, he is perhaps best represented by Admiral Edward C. Kalbfus. His two-term presidency afforded an opportunity to develop a College response to the dynamic changes of the late 1930's. Despite his propensity to involve himself excessively in routine College matters, Kalbfus earnestly sought to make the College responsive to the Navy's emerging commitments. However, the magnitude and rapidity of professional changes compounded by worldwide political and economic instability often reduced his managerial maneuverability to virtually rearguard action. Yet a major achievement of the Kalbfus presidency was the Department decision to continue the College operation during the mobilization period. Kalbfus' efforts contributed substantially to this reversal of an earlier Department plan to close the College. As a result, the College was able to operate through the war years, to maintain

a program Kalbfus largely devised, and to ease into postwar operations. For this foresight and action, he stands out among the College's distinguished presidents.

In July, 1940 (when the General Board replied negatively to the Secretary of Navy's inquiry of "Are we ready?") the Naval War College could look back on its operating experiences of the previous twenty-one years with mixed reactions. When some naval writers miniaturize the Naval War College's contributions to naval preparedness during the interwar period, they choose to ignore the fact that the world's most prestigious civilian universities do not provide a totality of educational opportunity or experience. Yet, operating within the constraints of national and Department policy and practices, restricted resources, and human frailties, the College wielded an admitted influence on the thinking and action of those officers who would successfully lead American naval forces in the Second World War.

When the Pearl Harbor attack occurred, the Naval War College faced four years of concentration on the Navy's immediate administrative and operational problems. In fulfilling its wartime mission, the College rendered valuable assistance to the successful prosecution of the war. Experiences of that era, combined

with those of earlier periods, would be integrated into a postwar program (marked by breadth, depth and diversification) that would immensely please Luce, Mahan, Rogers, Sims and other College advocates of those long ago times.

APPENDIX I

SECRETARIES OF NAVY

1919-1941

Josephus Daniels	- 5 March 1913 - 4 March 1921
Edwin Denby	- 5 March 1921 - 10 March 1924
Curtis D. Wilbur	- 19 March 1924 - 4 March 1929
Charles F. Adams	- 5 March 1929 - 4 March 1933
Claude A. Swanson	- 5 March 1933 - 7 July 1929
Charles Edison	- 2 January 1940 - 24 June 1940 ^f **
Frank Knox	- 11 July 1940 - 28 April 1944

* Acting Secretary of Navy, 8 July 1939 - 2 January 1940

** Lewis Compton (Acting) 24 June 1940 - 10 July 1940

APPENDIX II

CHIEFS OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

1919-1941

Admiral William S. Benson	- 29 August 1916- 24 September 1919
Admiral Robert E. Coontz	- 1 November 1919- 21 July 1923
Admiral Edward W. Eberle	- 21 July 1923- 14 November 1927
Admiral Charles F. Hughes	- 14 November 1927- 17 September 1930
Admiral William V. Pratt	- 17 September 1930- 30 June 1933
Admiral William H. Standley	- 1 July 1933- 1 January 1937
Admiral William D. Leahy	- 2 January 1937- 1 August 1939
Admiral Harold R. Stark	- 1 August 1939- 12 March 1942

APPENDIX III

PRESIDENTS OF THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

1919-1941

Rear Admiral William S. Sims	- 11 April 1919- 15 October 1922
Rear Admiral Clarence S. Williams	- 1 November 1922- 5 September 1924
Rear Admiral William V. Pratt	- 5 September 1925- 17 September 1927
Rear Admiral Joel Roberts Poinsett Pringle	- 19 September 1927- 31 May 1930
Rear Admiral Harris Laning	- 16 June 1930- 14 May 1933
Rear Admiral Luke McNamee	- 3 June 1933- 15 June 1934
Rear Admiral Edward C. Kalbfus	- 15 June 1934- 15 December 1936
Rear Admiral Charles P. Snyder	- 2 January 1937- 27 May 1939
Rear Admiral Edward C. Kalbfus	- 30 June 1939- 16 June 1942

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- Record Group 18 - Publications
- Record Group 22 - Presidents
- Record Group 25 - General Subjects

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